United Nations A/57/PV.26

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

26th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 8 October 2002, 10.00 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Miss Clarke (Barbados) took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 44 and 10 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/270 and A/57/270/Corr.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1)

Mr. Lancry (Israel): I wish to congratulate the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization and for his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. It is no coincidence that, under his able stewardship, both he and the Organization were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This distinction is a tribute — but it is also a challenge.

It is a tribute to the active and positive role that this Organization has played in coordinating the international community's response to the great challenges of the twentieth century — the re-establishment of peace and stability, sustainable development, the environment and HIV/AIDS.

The challenge, however, is to deal coherently and cooperatively with the subject matter of the twenty-first century: globalization and interdependence. We wish to reap the benefits of globalization, but also to avoid its pitfalls. The advantages of progress cannot — and must not — be attained at the cost of ignoring the rights of others to development, or by disregarding our increasingly fragile planetary ecosystem. The dangers are great, but the rewards are even greater.

Whereas this Organization dealt comprehensively with the spectres of the twentieth century, those of the twenty-first century still loom before us. As the unthinkable became reality just one short year ago, we realized that, as the danger of traditional war recedes, we must face the new realities of terrorism. My country, unfortunately, has had bitter experience as a victim of terrorism since before we established our independence; today, the world stands united in its condemnation of terror in whatever form, regardless of cause or grievance.

Much has been said about the root causes of terrorism. I must, however, refer to what my Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs so aptly stated from this rostrum just a few weeks ago, on 18 September: "Terror creates poverty more than poverty creates terror." This is the unfortunate truth we must face. The international community must remain vigilant; it must continue to fight the manifestations of evil wherever they are found, where they breed and multiply and receive succour and assistance. States must be held to account for the assistance they provide to the machinery of evil.

At the same time, we must keep one eye firmly on the Millennium Development Goals, the

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achievement of which would go a long way towards draining the swamp in which terrorism feeds. Israel participated fully in the landmark meetings at Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg, and looks forward to taking an active role in the implementation of their conclusions.

Barely 10 years after the State of Israel was founded, we realized that, in spite of our own development needs, we were in duty bound to share our experiences with other developing countries. MASHAV — Israel's Centre for International Development Cooperation — places emphasis on capacity-building and sustainability in those fields deemed to be most critical in the development process. It is no coincidence that those fields mirror those the Secretary-General noted as paramount: water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

In 2001 alone, more than 8,000 people participated in 230 courses, in addition to more than 200 long-term and short-term consultancies the world over. Special emphasis is placed on the empowerment of women, encouraging self-sufficiency and economic independence.

Israel has been active not only in cooperation with, but also in the creation of, international frameworks in priority areas. Everyone involved in the mechanisms of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change is aware of the contributions made by Israel towards strengthening those multilateral frameworks.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a further example of the necessity of concerted, global efforts to meet the Millennium Goals. Besides the critically important research and development being conducted in Israel and in other centres around the world, action at the grass-roots level is no less important. The African continent has been hardest hit by this modern-day plague. It is in this context that we wish to congratulate the courage and foresight of African leaders in creating two frameworks — the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development — to face these challenges head-on in a spirit of partnership, rather than in one of dependence. Israel remains committed to cooperating with Africa and to working in close partnership with relevant actors and specialized agencies to ensure the success of this ambitious new programme.

Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the United Nations has begun the sometimes painful, but always necessary, process of reform and restructuring. Much has been done and still needs to be done to craft this Organization into the body it aspires to be: a forum for the promotion of peace, a bastion of freedom and development, and a guardian of our planet's resources. Israel is committed to working hand in hand, in a spirit of friendship and cooperation, with our partners, nations and United Nations bodies alike, to formulate a collective response to the challenges of the new millennium for the benefit of all the peoples of the world.

Mr. Fall (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The relevant reports we have received from the Secretary-General give us once again this year the full measure of the complexity of the tasks we face and the extent of the challenges we have to take up. We therefore remain firmly convinced, as ever, that multilateral action, which is the raison d'être of the United Nations, must today, more than ever before, remain the foundation, the driving force and the bastion of our ideals, the direction we take and the foreign policy choices we make.

Here we are, gathered together once again, to seek and identify ideal consensus solutions to the Herculean tasks facing us. Since the tragic events of 11 September 2001, it has become clear that no unilateral action, however well founded, can in itself put an end to the unspeakable monster of international terrorism or of its despicable surrogate, organized transnational crime.

Similarly, only by acting together can we stop the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, to take control over the continuing deterioration of the environment, to annihilate the proliferation of inter- and intra-State conflicts, to reduce the enormous digital divide, to cut off the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, to eradicate the trafficking in human beings and to resolve so many other ills and calamities.

All those obstacles and crippling handicaps represent grave threats to international peace, security and stability. But even worse, there is also a danger that they may irremediably jeopardize the future survival of humanity as a whole and, above all, the land of Lumumba, Nasser, Nkrumah, Nyerere, Senghor and Mandela.

Over the past year, African issues have occupied a major place on the United Nations agenda. This means that Africa continues to be seen as a continent where armed conflict and humanitarian disasters continue, where poverty and HIV/AIDS are increasing, where accidental and other disasters are spreading, where official development assistance is decreasing, where the excessive debt burden grows heavier, where foreign direct investment is waning, and where institutional problems are preventing the private sector and civil society from developing, as well as preventing the promotion of women's rights.

Independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) shows that the objectives set jointly and agreed for Africa have not been achieved, even though, over that period, Africa has been a theatre for courageous reforms undertaken by Governments in the areas of economic and political good governance, human rights and the rule of law.

The outcome anticipated by the international community continues to falter as it tries to rise to the level of legitimate expectations. Drawing lessons from unsuccessful attempts — if not outright failures — to implement the innumerable plans and strategies for Africa, African leaders launched, alongside the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The enthusiasm and mass support that this unprecedented initiative has already garnered, because it was conceived by and for Africans, should lead to resolute, concrete and consistent action by the international community, in particular the developed countries and partner institutions.

Now that the stage is set, the goals proclaimed and the means identified, we must move from words to deeds in order to meet Africa's special needs. Henceforth, all efforts at peace and all development initiatives taken by the United Nations system for the benefit of Africa should be directed towards this paramount goal and should be a part of the strategic and operational priorities laid down in NEPAD and which, in fact, are consistent with those set at the Millennium Summit.

From that standpoint, it bears recalling that the specific goals for Africa set forth in the Millennium Declaration relate to support for regional and subregional mechanisms for conflict prevention and the promotion of political stability, including the African Union's Peace and Security Council and the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism. These objectives focus on special measures for poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development, among other things, by cancelling debt, broadening the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, improving access to markets, increasing official development assistance and foreign direct investment flows, enhancing the transfer of technology, and the strengthening African capacities to prevent the spread HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.

As we can see from the Secretary-General's report, these goals are taking time to come to fruition. Therefore Senegal believes that the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, which is our breviary and road map, remain an absolute priority and a categorical imperative for the Organization. It cannot be delayed, put off or set aside. It must remain even when it comes under the threat of being overtaken by more pressing current issues. Because this Millennium Declaration, as so rightly underlined by Mr. Kofi Annan, is the expression of the common aspiration of the Member States of the United Nations for a peaceful, prosperous and just world in which all people can live in a secure environment.

My government welcomed the initiatives of the Secretary-General and the Organization that focus on the indicators and data which make it possible to measure progress in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. It is important from this vantage point to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations, regional and sub-regional organizations, in particular with regard to the prevention and management of conflicts.

In this respect the United Nations should continue to cooperate with Member States and non-State actors in providing better coordination of assistance and protection for civilian populations in situations of armed conflicts. Sustained attention should be given to the post-conflict rebuilding of countries devastated by war, and here I refer to Guinea Bissau and certain countries in the Manu River Basin as well as in the Great Lakes subregion and to further supporting efforts of disarmament and demobilization as well as the reintegration into society of ex-combatants, especially child soldiers, into civil life.

My delegation also wishes to express its satisfaction at the establishment of an office of the

United Nations in West Africa based in Dakar. This office has the full support of our Government because it will contribute to increasing the visibility of the activities of the United Nations in the field, coordinating the work of the various agencies of the Organization and consolidating the initiatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) so as to confront the manifold conflicts and crises that tear the subregion apart and make it prey to recurrent attempts to impose anti-constitutional changes, including the recent one in Côte d'Ivoire which we unanimously and justly condemn.

I would like to conclude where I began. The United Nations is what we make it and is our common and indispensable tool. Certainly it is an imperfect tool, but a useful one that we cannot do without or replace. Multilateralism, which is its founding principle and vital life breath, serves the interests of all the members of this superb and humanistic brotherhood.

It is through a coherent and concerted consensus approach that we can achieve the goals of the Millennium and ensure the peace, security and stability of the world; only in the same way shall we be able to fulfil the action plans that emerged from the major conferences and summits that have been held all over the world; and it is also with such a coherent, concerted and consensual policy that we shall succeed in endowing the Organization with the means it needs to become democratic and strong, so that each day, more of its work can be concentrated on essential tasks that enable it to devote itself to the service of the United Nations family.

In this spirit, my delegation would like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his personal determination and commitment in the implementation of the results of the debates of our Organization, in appropriate cases, by appointing a high-ranking representative for the least developed countries, the landlocked countries and the small island developing States, as well as for the restructuring and redeployment of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Africa and the Least Developed Countries within the framework of the new African responsibilities it will soon assume.

Since words become action, principles become programmes and commitments become obligations, we now have before us the Millennium Declaration and its implementation plan. This will enable us to open up the path and lay down the guidelines for our future development towards a better world, which is based upon coherent and legitimate initiatives of the United Nations, including those of the Security Council, on the basis of the cardinal principles of universality and multilateralism.

Under the surface of the rigidity and ponderousness of United Nations procedures, which all too often, alas, determine our collective inability to act, we should henceforth be moved and motivated by a single imperative, the political will to give concrete embodiment to the commitment of citizens subscribed to in the Millennium Declaration for the building of a better life on a common planet.

Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia.

Mr. Teruneh Zenna (Ethiopia): We commend the Secretary-General for his analytical and balanced reports on the Implementation of the Millennium Declaration and on the Work of the Organization. The report on the Implementation of the Millennium Declaration has shown us where we stand and the problems that need to be addressed in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

The Secretary-General's report enumerates our achievements in maintaining peace and security in many parts of the world, including Africa, where we were able to find solutions for a number of inter- and intra-State conflicts because, among other things, the United Nations worked in collaboration with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and other regional organizations. In this regard, we commend the plans of the Secretary-General to strengthen the existing relations between the two organizations in the light of the evolution of the OAU into the African Union.

Ethiopia highly values peace and security, because without it, we cannot fight the poverty and disease that are ravaging the continent. Ethiopia, with a population of 65 million people, has a great stake in promoting the causes of peace and security in the region. That is why we readily accepted the Ethio-Eritrean Border Commission's ruling, and we are now doing our best, together with other member countries of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), to build peace in the subregion.

It would be difficult to find lasting solutions to conflicts unless we address the root cause of the problem. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that much of sub-Saharan Africa and large parts of Central Asia are falling behind in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. We all know that not enough is being done to avert this negative trend. Despite the continued commitment of donor countries, official development assistance declined for about two decades as a percentage of gross national product, reaching its lowest level ever at 0.22 per cent in 2001. Only five countries met the 0.7 per cent target in 2001, while others gave as little as 0.1 per cent of their gross domestic product.

Regarding debt sustainability, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative has been very slow in its implementation. World commodities prices, such as those for coffee, have plunged in recent years, thereby further aggravating the deteriorating terms of trade. The report states that, as a result, we are confronting a world divided between rich and poor as never before in human history. Unless we overcome this unhealthy dichotomy, the future of world peace and stability will be in great danger.

Besides dehumanizing poverty, natural disasters have brought severe suffering to millions of people in the developing countries. In recent years, the frequency and severity of drought have intensified, especially in eastern and southern Africa, creating chronic food shortages in the region. The combined effects of bad weather, desertification, declining soil fertility, poor transportation, insufficient investment in agriculture, deteriorating terms of trade, uncontrolled population growth and bad Government policy have all played a role in worsening food shortages in the region. To avert the impending food crises in Africa, great emphasis should be placed on launching a frontal attack on such factors as recurrent drought and desert encroachment in affected countries through irrigation systems and continued afforestation.

The problem of famine we are confronting is not only associated with shortages of food, but is also the effect of the lack of income and purchasing power of the affected population. Therefore, any policy aimed at eliminating hunger should also seek to create alternative off-farm employment for the rural poor. In this regard, we fully agree with the Secretary-General's assertion that

> "the range of current crises has demanded a flexible, strategic and system-wide response linking the provision of emergency assistance to the search for sustainable solutions". (*A/57/1, para. 73*)

In this regard, we think it is imperative, in the light of the present and recurrent drought in the region, that the Secretary-General invigorate the initiative he took in 2000 to address the long-term problem of food security, agricultural development and related aspects.

In Ethiopia, the centrepiece of our development policy is agriculture-based industrialization. The main goal of the policy is to eliminate the chronic food shortage and to enhance the overall development of the country by increasing productivity in agriculture, on which 80 per cent of the population depends for its livelihood.

Besides poverty, diseases such as HIV/AIDS are threatening the very survival of our countries. We appreciate the effort of the Secretary-General in setting up the special Fund to help us fight the pandemic. We are encouraged by concrete measures being taken by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the World Bank to mitigate the onslaught of HIV/AIDS in Africa. In Ethiopia, the Government, religious organizations and other non-governmental organizations are working together to fight the disease. Notwithstanding this effort, we realize that we have a long way to go to arrest the onslaught, but with the concerted efforts of the Ethiopian people and the assistance of the international community, we can overcome the human suffering caused by poverty and diseases.

Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the President and all the members of the Bureau on their election to guide the work of the General Assembly at this session. I also wish to convey our appreciation and gratitude to the Secretary-General for his annual report on the work of the Organization, which covers most United Nations activities over the past year.

In studying the report, we note that the international political atmosphere is dominated by the language of anti-terrorism and pre-emptive warfare adopted by the United States. This was confirmed by the statement made yesterday by the United States President on the pretext of protecting national interests. It sets a serious precedent in the field of international

relations, for it is likely to marginalize this Organization, which the international community created in order to save mankind from wars.

We note the extent to which, since the early 1990s, this Organization has demonstrated hesitancy in addressing the issues of peace and security and been the subject of consistent and sustained intimidation and threats from the United States of America. What better proof of this could there be than the global deterioration in international security and stability, along with the shedding of more blood in our Arab region? Like it or not, the language of pre-emptive warfare has had repercussions on our debates, particularly at this critical moment for the Organization. We must therefore be realistic and have a clear sense of our respective positions, of the fundamental problems we face and of the way in which to resolve them peacefully.

It is clear that the issues of peace and security are the key prerogatives of this Organization. My delegation fully understands that it is the primary responsibility of the United Nations and the Security Council to maintain international peace and security. However, a successful strategy for preventing armed conflict and for building peace requires collective attention and effort in addressing the challenges facing the international community. We must reject double standards. We must opt for justice and impartiality in our approach to the various issues within the United Nations. Similarly, all Member States — the United States above all — should repudiate once and for all the policy of issuing threats to the sovereignty of countries, interfering in the internal affairs of States, artificially triggering crises and fuelling conflicts in the service of their selfish narrow interests.

We must also reinforce the primary role of the United Nations and international law in dealing with all perils, including poverty, terrorism, disease and armed conflict.

The Secretary-General has reported on his conversations with the Iraqi Government on the return of arms inspectors to Iraq. My Government has displayed its genuine and sincere willingness to implement all relevant Security Council resolutions and to dispel any doubts about whether it possesses weapons of mass destruction. It has done so in order to reach a comprehensive settlement leading to the lifting of economic sanctions against my country; to end interference in our internal affairs; to free the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction; and to put an end to the no-flight zones.

Taking all of that into consideration, Iraq has been willing to accept the unconditional return of United Nations arms inspectors. The negotiations that took place in Vienna on 30 September and 1 October of this year were successful. We were able to make arrangements for the resumption of inspections in Iraq. Despite the success of those negotiations and Iraq's unconditional acceptance of the return of inspectors, the American Administration and the British Government have persisted in their diplomatic and misinformation campaign aimed at sabotaging those efforts and preventing the return of inspection teams to Iraq. They have striven to get the Security Council to adopt a new resolution with new impossible conditions in order to create a legal pretext for invading Iraq and seizing its oil and for increasing tension throughout the Middle East. The motives of the British and the United States are very clear. They are creating a major precedent in international relations and are acting in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, which guarantees peace and security, the rule of law and equal sovereignty of all states. Those are the founding principles of the Organization and have been reaffirmed on many occasions, including at the Millennium Summit.

Allow me to note that the international community and the General Assembly itself need to be reminded of the suffering caused to the Iraqi people by the economic blockade, which has been overlooked. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that relief from sanctions greatly depends on Iraq's compliance with all the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Security Council adopted resolution 1409 (2002) to relieve the humanitarian situation, but it has not achieved anything on the ground. Those who presented that resolution claimed that its purpose was to ease the embargo and to give Iraq access to humanitarian products. Unfortunately, the results have been negative. The time period that the Office of the Iraq Programme requires to deal with a contract was previously only two working days. It has now become ten working days. It takes at least ten days for the experts of United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to examine contracts. If everything goes well, the process can take as long as

three weeks. But if IAEA or UNMOVIC requests additional information, the process can take as long as six months. The purpose of resolution 1409 (2002) was to bring wheat and other foodstuffs and medicines, such as anti-cancer drugs, into the country. Such products were supposed to go systematically and directly through the Office of the Iraq Programme. They were not supposed to be subjected to the same kind of scrutiny as potential dual-use products and equipment are.

We are still awaiting the acceptance by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990) of the list of goods requested by Iraq, subject to UNMOVIC and IAEA scrutiny. It has not yet been finalized.

We see that the suspended contracts have once again been postponed to 15 October 2002. This is in addition to the destructive role played by the United Kingdom and the United States in the Sanctions Committee. Those two delegations alone have been blocking the "oil-for-food" programme by applying retroactive prices to Iraqi oil in order to reduce the earnings under the programme. The result has been to hinder the financing of more than 1,240 contracts. Moreover, the so-called green list has been expanded. 1152 contracts worth over $3 billion have been suspended for no reason that we can find acceptable. The economic sanctions imposed on Iraq constitute a grave ethical failing that the United Nations must face as it undermines the very credibility of the Organization. The appalling humanitarian situation being suffered in Iraq has prompted certain observers to describe this policy of sanctions as a policy of collective punishment and genocide perpetrated against the Iraqi people. It has caused the death of approximately 1.7 million Iraqi citizens in the name of the United Nations. The only way to resolve the situation is by lifting the heinous embargo imposed on Iraq more than 11 years ago.

We would have liked the report of the Secretary-General to take note of the American and British daily bombardments that Iraq suffers in the so-called no-flight zones in northern and southern Iraq, which are totally illegal. They were put in place without the approval of the Security Council. They have led to the death of a large number of Iraqi civilians and to the destruction of water purification stations, schools, housing and public property. In December of last year, the Secretary-General spoke about this issue. He said that there was nothing in the Security Council resolutions that could authorize such no-flight zones. They are therefore without legal basis.

We also would have liked the report of the Secretary-General to include the real confessions of members of the former United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) concerning the espionage activities conducted by the United Kingdom and the United States against Iraq. I would like to note the statements of Rolf Ekeus, former Chief Inspector in Iraq, who said that the Americans took advantage of UNSCOM's activities to carry out espionage and that they successfully introduced spies into UNSCOM in the guise of inspectors in order to get information on Iraqi security systems, its forces and the residences of the President of the Republic. They also attempted to install surveillance and listening devices. Such actions are in violation of the dignity and credibility of the United Nations itself. They also constitute a threat to Iraq's national security.

The question of Kuwaiti missing persons has been raised, and Iraq has been called on to coordinate with the High-level Coordinator. We wish to note that the Secretary-General's report overlooked the initiatives that Iraq has taken, of which there is documentary proof. The latest initiative was a letter dated 16 August 2001 from the Iraqi Foreign Minister transmitted to the Secretary-General in document S/2001/804. In that letter the Foreign Minister indicated Iraq's readiness to cooperate with the Tripartite Commission concerning missing persons under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and in collaboration with countries with genuine lists of missing persons, including Iraq, that can be submitted for investigation. There have been many efforts to cooperate with the Committee on Missing Persons, the League of Arab States and ICRC.

The tragedy that the Palestinian people are undergoing under Israeli aggression, which is destroying infrastructure and pursuing a policy of massacres, assassinations, displacement, siege, starvation and settlement-building, could not have been precipitated had it not been for United States political, military and financial support to Israel. Those activities must be classified as terrorist activities. They are in fact State terrorism, but they are passed off as acts of self-defence. Israel is now talking about the need to reform the Palestinian Authority and to hold elections

in order to divert attention from the genuine core of the problem. That is the best example of the double-standard policy I spoke of earlier.

Israeli actions against defenceless Palestinians constitute a major violation of human rights, international law and the principles of the Charter. The United Nations must take a clear position on them in order to protect the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to liberate its territory and to establish a free and independent State, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. At a time when dozens of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions call for the rejection of all geographic and demographic changes being carried out in Jerusalem, the United States Government, which is accusing Iraq of non-compliance with Security Council resolutions, has itself signed a protocol for an agreement recognizing that Jerusalem should be the "eternal capital" of Israel.

Where, then, does the United States stand in terms of international law? What has become of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and where is respect for them? We feel the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority, and not the United States are the ones entitled to determine the capital of the Palestinian State. We encourage the United Nations, for the sake of international peace and security, to strive to avoid any further deterioration of the situation in our region, given the critical state of tension, of which we are so well aware.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): I thank the President for convening this joint debate on the Secretary-General's reports on the work of the Organization (A/57/1) and on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/57/270 and Corr.1).

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his excellent reports before us. We broadly agree with his assessments regarding the need for strengthening the United Nations, as well as for implementing the Millennium Declaration in an integrated and comprehensive fashion leaving no room for distortion or imbalance among the various commitments.

In the wake of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, there has been renewed recognition that the global community must work together to stamp out terrorism and to promote international peace and security, as well as to stimulate sustainable development, justice and social progress. That is the core message we get from the Secretary-General's reports, and we support it.

Nepal is reeling under the unspeakable anguish and trauma of Maoist violence and abject poverty. The Maoist terrorists have terrorized the nation by killing innocent people and destroying their property, as well as by blowing up public infrastructure. Their violence and brutality have reached new heights, causing further hardships for the people already desperate, after six years of terror.

The situation is such that even the Government of Prime Minister Deuba cowered under the Maoist threat to disrupt the midterm polls scheduled for 13 November 2002, and asked for the postponement of the polls by more than a year, creating a constitutional stalemate. As a result, His Majesty the King was compelled to remove the inept Deuba Government under article 127 of the Constitution, paving the way for a new Government capable of holding the elections at the earliest possible time. That was an interim step taken to protect the integrity of the constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy, to which the King has expressed full commitment.

Obviously, we need external assistance to fight the Maoist terror effectively, which entails equipping our security apparatus to protect people and their freedoms, and reducing poverty and providing education, health and basic services to give people hope and opportunity. We thank our friends who have supported us in this quest morally and financially, and we urge them to continue doing so.

In that context, we note with appreciation the Secretary-General's offer of his good offices to help resolve that problem, made in paragraph 25 of his report on the work of the Organization. We will remember that kind offer if we need it. However, we deplore any suggestion or that tends to equate the Government's action to protect its citizens and the Maoists' indiscriminate acts of violence.

Peace and development are indivisible, and they mutually reinforce each other. In the global village which the world has now become, conflicts tend to spill across countries and continents, and poor people seek opportunities to escape dehumanizing poverty, often creating delicate economic and humanitarian situations that the civilized world cannot ignore. That makes peace and development a common cause.

The past 12 months have been a tumultuous period for the world community. The terrorist attacks on the United States forced the community of nations to wage a war against terror. Meanwhile, many troubled States began a march to freedom and normalcy, and major conferences took place to promote economic growth, social development and environmental protection. At the same time, global recession continues to batter the peoples of many lands.

In the area of peace and security, the war on terrorism has freed Afghanistan from the clutches of the Taliban brutality and obscurantism and from the shroud of Al Qaeda terror. East Timor has emerged from the pall of violence and joined the family of free nations. Sierra Leone and Angola have breathed a sigh of relief after violence abated, and have begun to make their way back to normalcy. These are remarkably encouraging developments.

However, the Middle East continues to hang by the cusp, ready to plunge into a vortex of deeper violence and wider war. Though the siege against Mr. Arafat has ended, the Israeli repression and restrictions on the Palestinian people continue. War drums are beating ever closer in the Gulf, making the whole world nervous about its possible consequences. We call on all sides to exercise restraint and find peaceful resolutions to this crisis.

Moreover, South Asia remains highly volatile. The Great Lake Region is still under the pall of uncertainty. The Mano River area is descending into deeper crisis, and a number of conflicts elsewhere continue to defy solutions.

To our dismay, disarmament has taken a back seat in the global agenda, as Conference on Disarmament participants failed to agree on its programme of work for the fourth year in succession, while the Commission on Disarmament failed to meet in the last session. The good news of the United States-Russia agreement to reduce their nuclear weapons came with the bad, that the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) Treaty was on the chopping board.

Nepal is willing and committed to work with our regional and global partners to promote peace and security. Our participation in the United Nations peacekeeping and in the fight against terror at home and in the world bears eloquent testimony to our pledge. We call on Member States to do everything in their power to advance the goal of durable peace, whose road inevitably passes through disarmament and development.

There is no problem that the world faces today that is as deep and dangerous as that of poverty amidst the growing population of developing nations. Poverty is a source of human misery, underdevelopment and despair, as well as a breeding ground for conflicts. The present global recession has brought additional pain to peoples around the world, hitting the poor particularly hard.

In order to remedy this predicament, the Millennium Development Goals have provided a vision and a set of objectives for equitable and sustainable development on the planet. The Brussels, Monterrey, Johannesburg and Doha conferences have rekindled new hopes in this respect. The global meetings on children and on ageing and the New Partnership for Africa's Development are also important building blocks in the pursuit of this process.

The buzzword now must be implementation, the lack of which has strongly undermined past global compacts. The Secretary-General rightly warns us that business as usual is unlikely to help us achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Nepal is a case in point. A recent report has concluded that Nepal is unlikely to meet eight out of the ten Millennium Development Goals within the stipulated period, barring the reduction in child mortality and attaining the goal of providing drinking water.

Many other poor countries are in the same boat, but the situation in least developed countries is much worse. It is therefore necessary that development partners provide increased official development assistance, enhanced market access and deeper debt relief to developing nations, particularly the least developed ones. Other vulnerable groups, such as landlocked developing States, should also receive special attention from the international community. Such steps are absolutely essential to attain the Millennium Development Goals on schedule.

Indeed, the United Nations' role in helping the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and spurring development in general is broadly laudable. However, we fail to realize that the economic and social fields have suffered from neglect at the United Nations.

In our view, the United Nations must reverse this decline to serve its needy Member States better. In this context, we take the appointment of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, the Land-locked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States as a step in the right direction.

Humanitarian assistance and human rights promotion constitute the strongholds of the United Nations. We appreciate the Organization's work to protect refugees and displaced persons and urge it to focus more on finding durable solutions to the refugee problem, an aspect in which the United Nations remains weak.

I take this opportunity to call on the global community, including the United Nations system, to continue its support for the maintenance of the Bhutanese refugees in Nepal until a durable resolution is found, and to encourage Bhutan to speed up the bilateral negotiations.

Nepal applauds the International Criminal Court's coming into force and the international tribunals' recent breakthroughs. We also underline the difficulties that developing States are facing with respect to meeting the disparate and multiple reporting requirements under various human rights instruments.

Streamlining human rights reporting mechanisms and processes is vital to make the system more manageable. We welcome the appointment of the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Sergio de Mello, and hope that he will be able to reform the system and to contribute to human rights promotion.

Reforms remain one of the cardinal priorities of the United Nations. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council have witnessed some changes for the better, but they remain inadequate and their pace continues to be sluggish. Though the Security Council's methods have somewhat improved, its structural reform remains distressingly stalled.

I plan to dwell on the issue of reforms at greater length later on when the Secretary-General's report on the subject will be considered. Suffice to say that the proposed reforms are good but do not go far enough to prepare the United Nations for the challenges posed by its lofty principles and purposes.

Strong partnership is necessary among key stakeholders to achieve the shared goal of making this world more peaceful, prosperous, healthy, equitable and just for us and for our children. Nepal is committed to doing its part with the utmost determination and commitment.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Suriname.

Mrs. Loemban Tobing-Klein (Suriname): I feel very happy and privileged to present my statement under the capable leadership of a Caribbean woman, a Caribbean female Ambassador. I congratulate her.

We do not need lengthy statements and debates anymore. We do not need explanation of the Millennium Development Goals and targets. What we do need is concrete action and concrete translation of the Millennium Development Goals into deeds. Those Goals must also be translated into an improvement in the living conditions of peoples and into halving by 2015 the number of people living under extreme poverty and hunger. We are in urgent need of translating the Goals into universal primary education and into ensuring the insurance of primary schooling for all boys and girls.

What has to be done is clear and well known. We have to repeat always and everywhere that we have to protect all human rights at all times; that we have to focus on democracy and good governance, conflict resolution, security and peace; that we have to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; and that we have to reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. It is well known that at least 60 million people all around the world, and in particular in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean region, are affected by HIV/AIDS and that 20 million people have already died. We need the necessary resources, adequate medicine and treatment to fight these serious and destructive diseases. Through the Millennium Development Goals, our Governments have accepted the responsibility to ensure environmental sustainability, including sustainable access to safe drinking water and sustainable energy.

We have to repeat constantly that we need to develop a global partnership for development that includes an open trading system and special attention to the debt problems of developing countries, as well as to the special needs of least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing States. In that respect, we applaud the establishment of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing

Countries and Small Island Developing States, under the capable leadership of Under-Secretary-General Chowdhury. We must also repeat that official development assistance should at least be doubled and that developed countries should fulfil their promises and responsibilities to provide at least 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product to official development assistance.

The Panel headed by former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, which includes former United States Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, has estimated that meeting the Millennium Development Goals will cost at least an additional $50 billion in annual aid. That amount of money should be made available by international financial institutions, donor countries and the more developed world.

In his valuable introductory statement last Friday, the Secretary-General called on the developed world

> "to provide much more generous development assistance. Without these things, many developing countries will be unable to reach the Millennium Goals, however hard they try".

He also urged every country to assume its responsibility to find necessary ways and means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through the efforts of their own Governments and peoples, for, as the Secretary-General has also said, "whether they are met or not met is what happens in each separate country".

Both Professor Jeffrey Sachs — who is a macroeconomist and whom I believe is still the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals — and Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, have stressed their views on this subject several times, namely, that developing countries are by no means able to meet the needs of their people on the basis of their own financial resources. They need to be assisted. That is the reality.

While we are gathered here, millions of children, women, men, older persons, peoples with disabilities and indigenous persons are living under the most miserable circumstances. Millions of peoples, including children, are living without fundamental freedoms of action and choice and without peace: they are involved in war situations. The Millennium Development Goals, adopted in September 2000 by our heads of State and Governments here in this Hall, are promises for fundamental changes. Those changes first need to address the dimensions of poverty, including the lack of adequate food, shelter, clean drinking water, education and health, as well as the consequences of natural disasters.

Poverty, peace and security are interdependent. We know that. The issue that lies at the heart of the United Nations — international peace and security — has been thoroughly discussed and scrutinized over the past year as a result of the horrific events of September 2001. My Government has taken the necessary steps to implement resolution 1373 (2001). In our endeavours to combat international terrorism, I would like to reiterate the importance of ensuring that the human rights of peoples are not violated. That is very important.

The fact that the many forms of transnational organized crime — including drug trafficking, money laundering and corruption — are increasingly taking a global toll, shows the urgent need for a collective approach by the international community to deal effectively with these problems.

We agree with the Secretary-General that we need to deal with conflict by preventing it rather than to face its tragic consequences once it has erupted. It is therefore essential to take a multidimensional approach to international security, and not focus solely on the military aspect of security. We have heard about the immense amount of money devoted to the area of defence and military action. But we also have to look at political, social, economic and human security. The Organization of American States devoted its last general assembly session to the theme "A multidimensional approach to hemispheric security", an approach that my country supports. We recommend that the United Nations also remain constantly focused on the multidimensional approach to international security.

We must constantly repeat that the various aspects of development, and the necessary steps that need to be taken, were outlined at major conferences: on trade, at Doha; on financing for development, at Monterrey; and on sustainable development, at Johannesburg. The Secretary-General's recent announcement regarding the campaign to make the Millennium Development Goals better known

throughout the world and to try to mobilize behind them the force of public opinion is very promising. Ms. Eveline Herfkens, former Minister of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands — a country that has reached the goal of 0.8 per cent of gross national product devoted to official development assistance — who was appointed on 1 October 2002 as Executive Coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign, is a great advocate of putting one's money where one's mouth is. Indeed, we hope she will live up to that challenge.

We must underline the words of the Secretary-General: "...progress must be made on a much broader front. Otherwise, the ringing words of the Declaration will serve only as grim reminders of human needs neglected and promises unmet." (A/57/270, para.113)

In conclusion, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the work of the Organization and on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. We realize that we still have a long way to go to attain the Goals, but I am pleased to announce that we in Suriname are working on their implementation in the various sectors of my country, as we have stated on several occasions and in the Main Committees during the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly. Implementing the Millennium Development Goals should be the ultimate prerequisite for peace, security and sustainable human development for all our countries, all our Governments and all our peoples.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Chang Guk (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for presenting the reports on the work of the Organization and on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Our appreciation goes also to other Secretariat staff members for their contribution to the preparation of the reports.

I would like to mention in brief my delegation's views on strengthening the role of the United Nations in ensuring international peace and security and sustainable development, with regard to the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization.

The United Nations was founded with the purposes of achieving lasting world peace and security and developing friendly and cooperative relations among nations based on respect for sovereign equality. However, international peace and security are confronted by more serious challenges today as we enter a new century, 50 years after the founding of the Organization. The nuclear threat has increased, conflicts of various kinds have intensified around the world, and attempts to violate national sovereignty are newly undisguised. Still worse, poverty has deepened, debt burdens are rising and the gap between rich and poor has widened.

Today, the major challenge to peace and security is the emerging doctrine of power supremacy, which tramples on the principle of sovereign equality. The doctrine of power supremacy is a main factor in the undermining of international relations, and it poses a constant threat to peace, in disregard of the principles and norms of international law. The reckless arbitrariness reserved for the absolute supremacy of power aggravates international relations, increases confrontation and conflict among countries, violates the purposes and the principles of the United Nations and ignores the Organization itself. Ultimately, that constitutes the major challenge to the United Nations. Arrogant and impertinent statements labelling other countries as an axis of evil or as targets of pre-emptive nuclear attack, made at will and in one's own interests, are also rooted in the doctrine of power supremacy.

The challenges that we now face require us to demonstrate concerted will and action, in respect for sovereignty, equality and the development of fair international relations. It is now urgent that we decisively enhance the leading role of the United Nations in our joint efforts to develop just and fair relations among nations, based on sovereign equality, in order to guarantee world peace and security and sustainable development.

All Member States should respect the Charter of the United Nations and faithfully carry out the purposes and principles enshrined therein. What is important here is our adherence to the principles of justice and impartiality. Without the principles and the impartiality of international law, the just settlement of problems can never be assured. Only when the Charter is respected and implemented in good faith can all problems be settled properly.

My delegation asserts that the functions of the General Assembly should be strengthened and that the Security Council should be thoroughly reformed to meet the demands of Member States. In addition, the Economic and Social Council should be empowered to enhance its role and functions in order to reform unfair international economic systems and to contribute to taking substantive measures for the substantial development of developing countries.

In that respect, all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system must undertake active efforts to achieve the Development Goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. The United Nations must closely coordinate its global activities to realize sustainable development and must strongly promote the implementation of its development commitments and decisions by devoting more time and greater funds to that end.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Mubarez (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): After having seen the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, we are convinced of the rightness of that United Nations resolution.

The report is not simply a review of the achievements of the two previous years but offers us a vision that can guide our approach in future.

Here I should like to offer my thanks to the Secretary-General for a valuable report and to endorse his conclusion that the implementation of the Millennium Declaration has been both a success and a failure. It is significant that the terrorist attacks of September 2001 occurred one year after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration. This is a reminder that collective action is needed to meet the challenges and defuse the threats that face us, which are not confined to any single State.

The United Nations has given due attention to terrorism prevention through the deliberations conducted by the General Assembly last year, at the beginning of the preceding session, and through the establishment of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee. But we would like to reaffirm what the Secretary-General said in his report, namely that we should not confine ourselves to drying up terrorists' sources of funds and targeting their plans and organization, but also show some understanding for, and address, the conditions that give rise to terrorism. We should also redouble our efforts to bring about a conclusion of the discussions on the international convention on terrorism that it can become universal and deal with all forms of terrorism, including State terrorism.

In any event, it is not acceptable to confuse terrorism with legitimate resistance to foreign occupation. The Secretary-General points out that there has been an increase in the number of hotbeds of tension throughout the world. The world does seem to be backsliding, and the number of conflicts has increased. This is a reality that we cannot deny. Nor can we deny the achievements recorded by the United Nations in safeguarding peace and in settling disputes and conflicts over the same period.

However, the importance attached by the Security Council to certain issues and the selectivity that has been noted in the application of Security Council resolutions has given rise to certain questions. In particular, the Council has not rigorously applied resolutions relating to the Middle East. This is quite obvious. It has had an effect on the credibility of the Organization and has limited its effectiveness.

It is only logical that peace and security cannot be achieved in a world of inequality, repression and injustice. In this world, the great majority — 4 billion people — are deprived of the most basic necessities and are far removed from the material prosperity enjoyed by the minority.

Despite the efforts that have been made to narrow the gap between developed and developing countries, very little has been achieved. We believe that the absence of political will on the part of the developed countries in assuming their responsibilities remains the primary cause of the deterioration of the situation. The resolutions adopted at the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences are to a large extent linked to the positions and decisions taken by those States.

Mr. Kpotsra (Togo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Secretary-General's report underlines the fact that very limited progress has been made in the area of human rights over the last two years. The holding of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in

Durban last September stands as one of the major achievements of that period.

International attention should focus on the fight against terrorism, and in that respect the Secretary-General stresses that attempts to prevent terrorism should not be used as a pretext to violate the basic rights of individuals and of communities. At the same time, stopping terrorism involves the consolidation and protection of human rights and democracy, as well as social justice.

For our part, we would also like to affirm and endorse what has been said by many other delegations. We should avoid any policitization of human rights and any policy involving a double standard, because not only does this not contribute to the realization of human rights or of democracy, but it also damages international relations and impedes the achievement of the goals of this Organization.

In today's globalized and interdependent world, a world of common concerns, there is a great need to strengthen the role of the United Nations and its effectiveness as the best means and the best framework for multilateral diplomacy, which is no longer a choice but a necessity in the face of today's challenges.

We note with satisfaction the changes that have recently occurred in the United Nations in various areas and that are aimed at adjusting it to the rapid changes that are taking place on the international scene, so as to give the Organization the capacity to adapt and to consolidate its role in today's world. However, the winds of change have not affected the Security Council, despite the pressure of events and the logic of the situation, which makes it necessary to enlarge the Council's membership, including in the permanent category.

The delegation of Yemen has already expressed its support for the reforms and structural changes proposed by the Secretary-General, and we look forward to the opinions and observations he will make and conclusions he will reach in the report that he has promised to submit soon.

Mr. Balstra (San Marino): Let me congratulate the President on the decision to discuss jointly the two excellent reports of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization and on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. Indeed, both reports are complementary, and together they give us a detailed view of the global situation from the perspective of this Organization.

In his report, the Secretary-General provides us with some encouraging information on the implementation of the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration. Nevertheless, we cannot but reach the conclusion that the world situation is far from being satisfactory, especially in areas such as development, poverty, health, human rights, international security, and protection of the environment.

After almost 60 years of implementing international cooperation as established in the Charter of the United Nations, there are still substantial economic and political contradictions that are incompatible with the advances that humankind has achieved in the areas of science, technology, communications and culture.

The responsibility for the global situation does not lie only with the shortcomings of the mechanisms and institutions of international cooperation, but also, and in particular, with the lack of political will of Governments to comply with international obligations and commitments.

Comparing the information contained in paragraphs 20 and 42 of the report on the outcome of the Millennium Summit, one cannot but conclude that some of the priorities and decisions of Governments are morally wrong. These paragraphs tell us that, while global military spending exceeds $800 billion a year, millions of children continue to die each year for lack of health care, clean water, a safe environment and adequate nutrition.

Concerning disarmament, the picture could not be more discouraging. How could it be otherwise, when we read in the report that negotiations on disarmament issues and on the Convention on Biological Weapons are stagnant?

I would like to stress that both reports demonstrate that the only way to deal with the most important problems affecting humankind is through concrete multilateral initiatives and actions. The collective fight against terrorism being undertaken at present by the entire international community is clear evidence that multilateralism is the only effective means of coping with the problems confronting the world.

I shall refrain from commenting in detail on the issues raised by the Secretary-General, because San Marino agrees with most of his conclusions. However, an issue of particular interest to my delegation in the context of the strengthening of the Organization is the revitalization of the General Assembly. The way in which the General Assembly is structured does not meet the efficiency requirements that we all expect from the principal and most representative organ of the United Nations.

It is true that some adjustments have been made in these procedures, but they are not sufficient. It is necessary to continue with this task, especially in two major areas: the rationalization of its agenda and the way to ensure the follow-up and implementation of its resolutions.

The Millennium Declaration has set the goals we have to achieve. The Conferences of Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg strengthened these goals and established a roadmap for global progress. We have to act accordingly to ensure that all countries comply with their commitments in order to guarantee a fair distribution of the benefits of globalization.

But we have to keep in mind that the time has arrived to take stock of the principles proclaimed, the standards adopted and the goals set forth, and to start thinking about ways to ensure immediate implementation of these principles and the fulfilment of these goals.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): The past year has been a momentous period for the United Nations. In the face of challenges of a new order of magnitude, Member States have been called upon to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of multilateralism. These principles are best articulated in the Millennium Declaration.

The response of the United Nations to threats posed by terrorism to the security and stability of the global community, in the aftermath of 11 September, is well documented in the two reports submitted by the Secretary-General.

We wish to take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General and his staff for their clear and concise reporting on the progress achieved over the past year. We, as Member States of the United Nations, have a responsibility to one another to deal with threats to peace and security, while simultaneously addressing other pressing priorities.

As the Secretary-General himself stated in his opening remarks, it is imperative that we all do more to ensure that the pledges in the Millennium Declaration are fulfilled.

(*spoke in English*)

Poverty eradication, conflict prevention, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, sustainable development, HIV/AIDS and migration lost none of their urgency and, indeed, their relevancy to our own security.

We would like to draw attention to three areas highlighted in the Millennium Declaration, where progress has indeed been achieved since 2000, but where much remains to be done. These areas include, first, the establishment of the International Criminal Court; second, the responsibility of States to prevent conflict, to protect the innocent and to rebuild when conflict is over; and, third, to deal effectively with the special needs of Africa.

At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, heads of State and Government resolved

> "To ensure the implementation, by States Parties, of treaties in areas such as arms control and disarmament, and of international humanitarian law and human rights law, and [to] call upon all States to consider signing and ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court".

The entry into force of the Rome Statute on 1 July 2002 is recorded in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration as an important achievement in the past year, and rightly so. The Court is the first permanent international tribunal, capable of investigating and bringing to justice individuals who commit genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, the Secretary-General also calls to our attention the recent debate over the jurisdiction of the Court in cases involving the personnel of non-parties to the Statute employed in peacekeeping operations.

This issue is one that we take very seriously, as the adoption of Security Council resolution 1422 (2002) was part of an ongoing effort by one State — the United States — to secure broad immunities from

the Court that are inconsistent with the Rome Statute. Canada does not believe that any Government, any military, in fact anyone, should be above the law. Let us resist the pressures of any who would undermine the Court. And let us work resolutely to maintain the Court as an impartial and apolitical judicial institution. We call on all States to continue to promote the effective and responsible functioning of the Court and to uphold the sound principles upon which it is based.

In his report to the Millennium Assembly, the Secretary-General also challenged Member States to consider how the international community should reconcile its response to massive violations of humanitarian norms and human rights with its respect for the sovereign rights of States. Our leaders also committed themselves in the Millennium Declaration to expand and strengthen the protection of civilians in complex emergencies.

Finally, in his most recent report on implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the Secretary-General has again stressed that "Sovereignty brings with it the fundamental responsibility to protect the physical security and the civil, political, social and cultural rights of citizens."

In the follow-up to the Millennium Assembly, as Member States of the United Nations, we have a duty to examine these complex issues. In response to the challenge posed by the Secretary-General, Canada established the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which produced a landmark report entitled "The responsibility to protect". The responsibilities it outlines are threefold: the responsibility to prevent, the responsibility to react and the responsibility to rebuild.

We have been very pleased with the reception this report has received. We believe strongly that the ideas and concepts it promotes merit further discussion in this body. That is why we have circulated this report under agenda item 44 as document A/57/303.

We intend to bring forward a resolution on this issue shortly. To this end, we will be enlisting participation of Members in a dialogue on this critical subject. We believe that we will find that we share considerable common ground as we respond to the challenge posed to us by the Secretary-General. We very much look forward to working with Members of the Assembly over the course of the next few weeks.

As the Secretary-General underlined in his remarks to us at the beginning of this debate, our progress on reaching the Millennium Development Goals remains uneven. At the heart of the Millennium Declaration was the need to meet the special needs of Africa and to redress the poverty that is the decisive reality for so many people. We noted with concern the Secretary-General's analysis that 10 years ago, 48 per cent of the people of Africa were living on one dollar a day or less. Today, that figure has shrunk almost imperceptibly to 47 per cent. To meet our goal of reducing that figure by half by 2015, we will have to do much better.

It is for this reason that Canada, as this year's Chair of the G-8, has made implementation of the G-8 Africa Action Plan a priority. This Action Plan includes over 100 commitments, many of which are addressed to areas crucial to development, such as resource mobilization, peace and security, governance, education, health, economic growth, agriculture and water. We welcome the affirmation by France, the next Chair of the G8, that Africa will remain a priority on the G8 agenda.

Canada has noted the references in the Secretary-General's report to recent positive developments at the Summit in Kananaskis on 26 and 27 June, where the members of the G8 committed themselves to a "new partnership" to help end the continued the marginalization of Africa from the globalization process. Now, our urgent common responsibility here is to import the principles and priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development into the work of the United Nations itself on Africa.

Finally, the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration requires our urgent attention. While the challenges are considerable, we must heed the call of the Secretary-General and each do our part to make the vision of our leaders a reality.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the delegation of Ecuador, which I have the honour to lead, I congratulate the Secretary-General on his report on the work of the Organization and on his follow-up report on the results of the Millennium Summit. Both documents are valuable and contribute to a multilateral approach to issues involving all Members of the United Nations.

My intention in participating in this debate is to emphasize the conceptual dilemma, to which

Secretary-General Kofi Annan draws our attention, concerning the discrepancy between vision and reality. This is not a new topic for those who bear responsibility in international relations. Its deep meaning lies in the aspiration to an ideal and in the generation of a vision that will map out a course for the Organization in addressing the challenges it faces at this historic moment for humankind.

Reality is dictated by factors that limit what should be; that is the difference between vision and reality. Many States, as the Secretary-General indicates, want for their citizens precisely what they are unable to provide for them: the capacity, resources and means to achieve their aspirations.

In his report, the Secretary-General states that

> "no single country has the capacity to cope with the political, economic, environmental and technological challenges of an interconnected world." (*A/57/1, para. 4*)

It is true that our peoples and nations are interconnected, not only by their realities, but also in their dreams. We know that problems transcend national borders and call for international solutions — the internationalization of internal variables and the simultaneous internalization of external variables. This requires us to keep in mind that, at this stage in the history of humankind, we cannot ignore multilateral solutions. The Secretary-General points out that

> "multilateral action is possible in many cases where unilateral involvement would be impossible or undesirable". (*ibid.*)

Perhaps it would be appropriate for all States Members of this Organization to pause and reflect upon the new realities of a world that presents tremendous challenges as well as great opportunities. The vision of a new, fairer, more equitable and united world is our objective. It requires the resolve not only of individuals, but of everyone. It requires above all the political will to establish moral and ethical bases for the conduct of the international community.

The Millennium Declaration established priorities and objectives for action by the United Nations and its Members to be fulfilled within a specific time frame. The Secretary-General clearly indicates — and we fully agree with him — that we have fallen short in our achievement of such priorities and objectives.

At the same time, however, we wish to stress the fact that we have taken steps of far-reaching importance in the past year. Indeed, the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development established explicit and consensual guidelines for action to attain the Millennium Development Goals on the basis of a comprehensive approach. The Monterrey Consensus reflects an entirely reworked approach to international cooperation for development and lays a foundation upon which we should be able to build a global partnership, with the participation of all relevant actors at the international, regional and national levels.

If we are to attain the Millennium Development Goals, the immediate challenge is to develop a pragmatic programme to implement the Monterrey outcome on the basis of an essentially inclusive process in which all interested parties can make active contributions, and to strengthen cooperation among the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. Only thus will it be possible to achieve the necessary pooling of efforts and resources by the Government sector, business, civil society and the multilateral machinery, while at the same time creating a global economic system that is more democratic and fairer — in other words, favourable to development.

The Johannesburg Political Declaration and Plan of Implementation endorsed the multidimensional nature of environmental, social and economic development and elaborated specific and detailed guidelines and programmes of action in each of these areas on the basis of a comprehensive and integrated approach grounded in the fundamental recognition that poverty eradication, changes in patterns of production and consumption, and the protection of natural resources require immediate action.

In order to realize the Millennium Development Goals, we also need immediately to undertake the task of implementing the outcome of the Johannesburg Summit. We must move on from the mere enunciation or reiteration of commitments to finding and implementing innovative, viable and effective mechanisms.

One key aspect in improving the well-being and development of the developing countries is international trade. By definition, trade should promote

the optimal allocation and use of resources, thus deriving full advantage from the most significant capacities and strengths of the various economies. Reality highlights, by contrast, the persistence of significant protectionist and discriminatory practices, such as tariff escalation, quotas and other restrictions; unfair trading practices, such as the billions of dollars granted in subsidies; and the inappropriate use or abuse of certain instruments, such as anti-dumping measures. In this regard, it is particularly important that the commitments assumed at the World Trade Organization's Doha Ministerial Conference be fully honoured in a development-oriented way, as agreed.

Another positive development this year was the New Partnership for Africa's Development, a genuinely African initiative for tackling the challenge of development, which deserves the robust support of the international community and to the implementation of which the United Nations should contribute to the maximum extent. The High Commissioner should receive the broadest support and cooperation of all institutions of the system.

Hence, we believe that the past year has been particularly fruitful. Only development in its broadest sense will allow us to advance towards achieving solid and lasting international peace and security.

The current threats to international peace and security differ from those of the past. Social justice, respect for human rights and better work and production opportunities for the peoples of the developing world are the foundation on which genuine international security can be built.

This demonstrates the necessity of a renewed and strengthened multilateral system that offers solid channels for an increasingly effective international cooperation, founded on common norms and principles. Only in that way can such problems as terrorism, drug trafficking and transnational crime be combated effectively and lastingly.

The delegation of Ecuador considers that it is indispensable to support the efforts to reform the General Assembly. After many years and its many important tasks, the Assembly of the peoples of the world has ceased to be the scene of the great debates and the forum where all can apply their wills to solve the challenges presented by history. I wish to pledge to you, Sir, and the delegates, Ecuador's willingness to collaborate in the reform that will enable us to fulfil the visions of the men and women of this world and to change existing conditions that torment the world.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): From the outset, allow me to express my delegation's congratulations to the President on his election to preside over the fifty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are confident that with his able leadership, the General Assembly will successfully deliberate on all the important issues on our work programme.

Also, through the President, we would like to convey our gratitude to the Secretary-General and his hard working staff in the discharge of their functions on behalf of all of us, the Member countries of the Organization. Much of that work is reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1).

The Secretary-General's report features an overview of the remarkable efforts made by the United Nations to tackle the many problems facing the international community. Examples of such issues include the struggle to achieve international peace and security, combating international terrorism, poverty eradication, the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, as well as sustainable development, to name a few.

In the field of international peace and security, we note the tremendous efforts that the United Nations has made in countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Congo. My country has also had its share of the world's problems, especially in the province of Bougainville.

In that case, the United Nations has supported the Government and people of Papua New Guinea in every step we took in the peacemaking process. The United Nations continues its support with respect to lasting peace on Bougainville, which has been heartening. We are deeply grateful to the United Nations and, indeed, to the Security Council and its members, for their contribution in the past, which we sincerely hope will continue in the future. The establishment of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville and its continued role in the peace-building process, including the current disarmament programme, is a highly commendable process.

The dividends of peace that we see in trouble spots, such as in my country, is a testament to the loyalty and commitments of United Nations personnel

deployed on peacekeeping duties. We are cognizant of the important role they play in the maintenance of international peace and security and therefore urge all of us to support this noble cause.

The United Nations has championed global efforts to address the aforementioned and other issues affecting its Member countries. This is reflected in the important international conferences and in the adoption of appropriate legal instruments to deal with those issues. That includes the adoption of the Rio outcome on biological diversity, climate change and the statement on the Forest Principles; regional and international treaties to ban nuclear tests; the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and conferences on the rights of women and children, to name a few.

While noting the remarkable efforts by the international community under the auspices of the United Nations, it is fair to say that the lack of progress in certain areas of implementation can be attributed in part to the inadequate commitment of financial and other much needed resources for successful implementation.

As the Organization charged with servicing the needs of Member countries, we are pleased to note the efforts of the United Nations to streamline our common endeavour to meaningfully address the issues facing humanity. This is evident through the Doha Ministerial Declaration on trade, the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development, the Millennium Development Goals and the recently concluded Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. Collectively, they provide a clear road map for the United Nations and the international community to meaningfully address the different issues facing humanity.

The Millennium Goals are also the national development goals of Papua New Guinea. We therefore look forward to securing international assistance to complement the national efforts to achieve our national development objectives.

Being a small island country, Papua New Guinea faces the extreme development challenges also faced by other small island developing States. The lack of adequate resources and the resulting constraints place the country in a difficult position to fulfil its international commitments under the Millennium Declaration and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The same is true of other neighbouring Pacific island States.

In the light of that, we view regional collaboration through regional organizations, such as the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, as critical for us to forge collective efforts to address issues of common concern. The technical experts in our region play an important role in assisting Pacific island countries in meeting their development challenges and in fulfilling our commitments and obligations, as stipulated in the Millennium Declaration, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and other relevant instruments.

In that context, it is important for regional organizations, such as the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, to establish good working relations with the United Nations Secretariat. In that way, we believe the United Nations Secretariat and, indeed, other world organizations and bodies, would better appreciate the problems and development challenges we face.

Finally, we commend the Secretary-General for his commitment and pledge our continuing support.

Mr. Lamba (Malawi): I wish to express solidarity with earlier speakers who have spoken so eloquently on the matter under discussion today — particularly considering the great importance of the Millennium Summit and the centrality of the issues it raises on the development of the poor regions of this world, including Africa. Let me also thank Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive report (A/57/270) on the progress so far registered in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and further actions to be taken to accelerate the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals.

In his report, the Secretary-General has pointed out that the Millennium Declaration represents the vision of the great family of nations in their pursuit of justice, peace and prosperity for all humanity.

In his report, the Secretary-General has pointed out that the Millennium Declaration represents the vision of the great family of nations in its pursuit of justice, peace and prosperity for all humanity. As indicated by the Secretary-General, we are sadly nowhere near attaining even one tenth of the Millennium Development Goals, two years after they were adopted. The pace of implementation is clearly

too slow, and drastic actions and stronger efforts need to be made to fast-track implementation.

On the issue of peace, security and disarmament in the world, a mixed picture has emerged, albeit negative in certain regions, including the African continent. Encouraging results have, however, been seen in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola — just to mention two — where peace initiatives are on course and the fruits of those positive trends are already evident. We congratulate all the parties involved in those peace processes. It is our hope and our wish that peace and stability will quickly return to Côte d'Ivoire, where the situation is still turbulent.

I join other speakers in lamenting the horrible 11 September terrorist attack on the United States and the attendant loss of precious lives. Malawi seeks to reiterate its unequivocal condemnation of terrorism, whatever form it takes and no matter what cause may be advanced to justify its perpetration across the globe. No reason can justify terrorism.

There is need to control and dispose of surplus illicit small arms and light weapons. Malawi is currently the unfortunate victim of that menace, largely due to the influx of illegal small arms that have ended up in the hands of common criminals. That is a problem shared by many countries today.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to destroy the limited success so far registered on the socio-economic front in our countries. It is destroying the very core of our productive capacity, comprising young men and women. We need the support of our development partners in that fight, particularly on the African continent. It must be recognized that HIV/AIDS is not only a health or development issue; it is also a security issue for all countries, as manifested by its debate, for the first time, in the Security Council in January 2000.

The issue of poverty reduction is close to the heart of most domestic programmes of development in our economies, such as Malawi's , where it forms the rallying call of the Government. The goal of cutting by half the number of people that survives on less than a dollar a day by 2015 is therefore extremely crucial for the United Nations family, particularly for us in the developing world.

My delegation appeals to the developed nations and to the World Trade Organization to create a more conducive environment for the promotion of increased free trade for our products to be able to penetrate and compete favourably the international markets for sustainable development. In this era of increasing globalization and aid fatigue, trade remains our only hope for growth and progress.

We would like to ask the developed countries not only to give us soft loans, but also to go all the way in completely writing off the outstanding debts. We ask them to concentrate on grants and foreign direct investment, and also to increase official development assistance to the recommended level of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product. Let me take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. Malawi has been able to benefit from that arrangement. The funds so far released have been invested in the social sector programmes, such as education, transport, health and water supply. However, there is urgent need to consider some of the conditionalities attached to HIPC, if the initiative is to vindicate its proponents and advocates.

In conclusion, I call upon the developed world to help us, unconditionally and without further procrastination, contribute to the full realization of the vision and goals of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We in Africa believe that through NEPAD, the continent will be able to overcome underdevelopment and poverty, but we need massive external support and encouragement from our partners in order to reach that goal and to translate that noble vision into practical reality.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Angola.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the President on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly and express my delegation's commitment to support him in carrying out his duties.

My delegation joins previous speakers in expressing our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization and on the implementation of the Millennium Goals. We are indeed fortunate to have an Organization such as the United Nations, whose scope of work and leadership makes collective constructive action possible. Through our collective actions during the past year, we made the world a better place. That is

not to say that we have eliminated all challenges to the quality of life of our citizens. In addition to the previously existing challenges, new ones have emerged.

Such is the case with the scourge of terrorism and the rapidly expanding HIV/AIDS pandemic. Nonetheless, the reports of the Secretary-General reflect this noble Organization's predisposition to adapt to new and emerging challenges so as to fulfil its mandates, chief of which are peace, security and sustainable development.

It is the stated objective of my country to contribute to peace and security in the world. That commitment is derived from our own experience in suffering the consequences of war. The people of the Republic of Angola are all too aware that sustainable development, political stability, good governance, the rule of law and the enhancement of respect for human rights can only be achieved through the prevalence of peace and security. To achieve peace and security, we cherish and defend the values at the foundation of the Charter. As it relates to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, we urge Member States, as has the Secretary-General, "to continue to increase our efforts to achieve international order and justice through negotiation and consensus" (A/57/1).

As stated in the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization, people who live in conditions of extreme insecurity and poverty and whose hope is persistently betrayed by our unwillingness to implement resolutions or our failure to support humanitarian operations, have candid concerns about questioning our ability to collectively and positively impact their livelihood. The only valid answer to those concerns is our continuous commitment to this Organization, the United Nations.

During the past year, in addition to supporting regional efforts aimed at conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building, the Organization undertook to continue to operate and establish peacekeeping and peace-building missions. We congratulate the Secretary-General for having presided over progress and over successful operations, including in the cases of East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone, among others.

In my own country, the collective efforts of the Angolan people and the international community brought about peace. Regrettably, there are also initiatives marked by less progress. Successful missions and initiatives can be traced back to one fundamental ingredient, and that is the commitment of Member States to assist the Organization in the implementation of collectively agreed courses of action. This premise holds true for the failure of the Organization in Iraq, the Middle East, Western Sahara and other places.

Another issue raised by the Secretary-General was that of humanitarian assistance to countries facing emergencies. As reported, donor response to United Nations consolidated appeals remains unsatisfactory. The report objectively outlined the deepening humanitarian crisis in some Member States, including my own. Besides the efforts of the Angolan Government to provide hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons and former combatants, the establishment of lasting peace still depends upon the degree to which the international community responds to the cause of peace and stability in my country. Failure to support other humanitarian crisis situations undermines the fulfilment of the mandate of our Organization.

Notable advances were also made by the international community in the fight against terrorism. To that end, the Organization proved its adaptability and capability to deal with new and emerging challenges. The Republic of Angola reiterates its strong condemnation of terrorist acts wherever they may occur, and continues to be committed to the strict implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). We are hopeful that the Open-ended Working Group of the Sixth Committee on drafting a comprehensive convention on international terrorism can conclude its work during the present session.

We regret the lack of progress in the area of disarmament, particularly as it relates to the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the establishment of covenants that will dissuade Member States from developing and acquiring weapons of mass destruction. We therefore urge the parties involved to consider the immense potential benefits to the many achievable through small risks taken by the few.

Commendable progress is also reported in the areas of electoral assistance, eradicating extreme poverty, attaining the Millennium Development Goals, the promotion of human rights and the fight against transnational organized crime, including the trafficking in persons, firearms and drugs. That would not have

been possible were it not for the development of effective partnerships with individual Governments of Member States and the participatory approach pursued by the United Nations.

We must also commend the report on efforts at reform. We firmly support all the efforts directed at enhancing the efficiency and readiness of the Organization. We are also pleased and enthusiastic about the introduction of modern resource management techniques. In the face of budgetary constrains, we encourage the introduction of an "electronic" United Nations. But we also caution that these efforts should not impact negatively upon the participation of all Member States, particularly that of the least developed countries.

The Millennium Development Goals represent a road map to sustainable development in the age of globalization. Their achievement will transform poverty and injustice into prosperity and justice. The methodology established to achieve the Goals recognizes the interdependency among nations, as well as that between security, the environment, the treatment of disease and the enhancement of human rights, governance and trade. Never before have we had such a comprehensive approach to development. The Millennium Goals embody a vision that is deeply rooted in our Charter and that is only achievable through acts by individual Member States that reaffirm multilateralism. While every country remains responsible for establishing an environment conducive to its development, the interdependence of today's concert of nations calls for mutual support and concerted action.

In conclusion, my Government believes that every success, as well as every failure, outlined in the report, belongs to all Member States. We all have a stake in the Organization's undertakings.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these agenda items.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, contained in document A/57/1?

It was so decided.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 10 and 44.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.27

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-seventh session

27th plenary meeting
Monday, 14 October 2002, 10.00 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Ms. Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 117 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/57/440/Add.2)

The Acting President: I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/57/440/Add.2. In the letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/57/440 and A/57/440/Add.1, Kyrgyzstan has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in that document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 7

Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/57/392)

The Acting President: As members are aware, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of matters with which the Council has ceased to deal.

In that connection, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General issued as document A/57/392.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of that document?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 11 and 40

Report of the Security Council (A/57/2 and Corr.1)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters: Report of the Open-ended Working Group

The Acting President: I give the floor to the President of the Security Council, Mr. Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, to introduce the report of the Security Council.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I have the privilege, in my capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October 2002, to introduce the annual report

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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(A/57/Corr.1) of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

At this stage, I should like, on behalf of the Council, to express my congratulations to you, Mr. Jan Kavan, on his election as President of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I have no doubt that, during his mandate, the relations between our two organs will be further strengthened to encourage optimal promotion of the purposes and principles of the Charter. We are also aware that, since Mr. Kavan assumed office, he has engaged Council members in a constructive and encouraging dialogue with a particular view to increasing the fluidity of exchanges between the two organs.

The report under consideration covers the period from 16 June 2001 to 31 July 2002. I should like to draw members' attention to the note by the President of the Security Council dated 22 May 2002, published as document S/2002/199. That document sets out the changes introduced to the format of the Council's report and the improvements made to it. I shall return to this later.

As members will have noted, the Security Council was very active between June 2001 and July 2002. It was able to consider in detail some issues that have been on its agenda for many years, and in some cases it was able to sharply reduce difficulties related to those items. Thanks to the determination and imagination of Council members, other, more recent, issues have been dealt with appropriately, with convincing results. Thus, specifically with respect to Africa, the Security Council, with its characteristic seriousness, has addressed the crisis situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Ethiopia and Eritrea, in Burundi, in Somalia, in Western Sahara, in Liberia, in Sierra Leone, in Guinea-Bissau and in the Central African Republic. I should like to emphasize and to welcome the fact that some of those crises are on the way to being resolved.

States member of the Assembly are aware that the Council has created its own Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. That Working Group, which is chaired by Ambassador Jagdish Koonjul of Mauritius, to whom I should like to pay tribute, has done remarkable work in the few months of its existence.

Also, with regard to the African part of the work of the Security Council, I should like to emphasize two steps that have had a significant impact on the way the Council addresses African issues, whether they relate to conflict management or to post-crisis situations. The Council's mission in May 2002 to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to other countries of the region gave it first-hand experience of the reality on the ground. Likewise, the workshop organized in July 2002 on the situation in the Mano River Union countries helped us to understand better the complexities and implications underlying certain conflicts in West Africa.

Other important matters before the Council are being addressed assiduously and with a commitment to progress: the Balkans, Cyprus, Iraq and the Middle East. Some of these have seen developments that have been welcomed by the entire United Nations community, in particular, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan.

As members are aware, the Security Council, in its work, goes well beyond the strictly conflictual aspects of the crises of which it is seized; when necessary, it also deals with them in a cross-cutting manner from a thematic perspective, as in the case of women or children in armed conflict, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, on 14 February 2002, the Council agreed on a new mechanism aimed at improving cooperation with troop-contributing countries. It also adopted by consensus, after difficult negotiations, resolution 1422 (2002), concerning matters including the legal situation of peacekeeping contingents.

Another threat to international peace and security that has mobilized the Security Council is terrorism. Faced with that scourge, the Council undertook to go beyond its specific areas of work and decided to take the bull by the horns. It set up a Counter-Terrorism Committee, which has become authoritative thanks to the dynamism of its Chairman, Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock, and to the fortunate involvement of all States members of the Organization.

The Council devotes much time to following up on the implementation of sanctions that it is obliged to impose on certain States. At the same time, it has continued to consider — under my presidency and after the excellent work done earlier by Bangladesh — the best possible way to improve the effectiveness of sanctions and to minimize their adverse consequences

on civilian populations or on third States. That very delicate exercise also leads us to evaluate the mechanisms for imposing, suspending and lifting sanctions.

All the issues that I have mentioned are merely a glimpse of the colossal amount of work done by the Security Council during the period under consideration. I should also like to stress the approach that the Council has chosen to renew its relations with non-States members not of the Council and with international public opinion.

It will be recalled that, during the debate on this agenda item during the fifty-sixth session, Assembly members put forward a number of ideas with regard to a better presentation of the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly. The Council has taken account of them, and I should like to stress here that the credit for that goes in large part to the Mission of Singapore. In that regard, I should like to express once again our deep appreciation to Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani and his team, whose commitment made it possible to properly focus the innovations included in the present report. Thus, the report is more than 300 pages shorter than last year's report, while containing more statistics on the deliberations and results of Security Council activities. The reduced format in which this report is submitted has saved the Organization approximately $300,000.

With regard to those statistics, we should emphasize that the Security Council held 264 official meetings, 91 more than during last year's reporting period; it adopted 75 resolutions, 23 more than last year; it adopted 47 official presidential statements, 12 more than last year; and it published 61 official communiqués and held 26 meetings with troop-contributing countries.

The holding of a large number of public, as well as Arria-formula meetings demonstrates the Security Council's clear desire to make its work more transparent and effective, with the objective of promoting the maintenance of international peace and security.

Another important improvement is the inclusion in the introduction of the report of an analytical overview of the Council's activities.

I would like to invite members of the General Assembly requiring further information to refer to document S/2002/603 of 6 June 2002, drawn up by the Secretariat and circulated as a document of the Council; the note from the President of the Security Council contained in document S/2002/199 of 22 May 2002; and the record of the 4616th meeting of the Council held on 26 September 2002 (S/PV.4616). Members of the Assembly will find in those documents an exhaustive record of all of the innovations that I have just summarized.

Next week the Council plans to hold an interactive debate on the outcome of the Assembly's work today and tomorrow. This demonstrates the interest and expectations of the Security Council with respect to the judgements and useful proposals that are submitted to it by the General Assembly. We are particularly interested in the response of members to our working methods and our work, which is always sensitive in nature and often complex.

In conclusion, I would like solemnly to express my appreciation to all the members of the Council without exception for their commitment and their dedication to the cause of peace and security. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his enlightened vision and the Security Council secretariat for its professionalism and invaluable daily support.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I am grateful to the Permanent Representative of Cameroon for introducing this year's report (A/57/2 and Corr.1) of the Security Council so comprehensively and ably, and I echo his expression of gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for supporting the Council so effectively.

I am delighted that this debate concerns a report of the Security Council whose format is much improved in comparison with those of previous years. I pay tribute to the initiative and energy of Ambassador Mahbubani and the delegation of Singapore in leading the Council in the production of a slimmer and more informative report. The United Kingdom was pleased to contribute to the new format by providing the draft of the introductory section, in which for the first time the Council has laid out a description of its substantive business over the year.

I believe that this innovation goes some way towards responding to the wish of the General Assembly to have a fuller and more interactive debate with the Security Council on the business on the Council's agenda, virtually all of which is of great

importance to the United Nations membership as a whole. I believe that the two institutions are beginning to understand each other better in this area. The Council is making a genuine attempt to be more open and transparent in its business. The period under review — mid-June 2001 to the end of July 2002 — was an exceptionally busy one. The Council has nevertheless taken care to hold as many open meetings as possible to encourage the wider membership to remain in touch with its business. The United Kingdom presidency in July this year, for instance, scheduled 29 open meetings — a record to date. I wonder whether that record will last for long.

The Council's output in resolutions, presidential statements and statements to the press continues to increase at a rate which challenges our capacity to manage all of the requirements put upon us. We must continue changing in order to keep up.

I hope that members of the General Assembly recognize that we have tried to be more transparent in quality as well as in quantity. In that context, I wish to place on record my gratitude to members of the General Assembly for their exceptional response to the overtures of the Counter-Terrorism Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). Their cooperation has been vital to that exercise, and I hope that the Committee's willingness to explain its work programme, its methods of business and its general approach to the implementation of that resolution has been one of the features behind the excellent work we and the members of the Assembly have done together since October 2001.

On the subject of combating terrorism, of course, we have only just begun, as the ghastly attack this weekend in Bali demonstrates. I express my sincere condolences to the Indonesian authorities and to the families of all the victims of that dreadful attack.

The opening up of the Council goes beyond the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. Many elected members of the Council have been exemplary in living up to their campaign promises to keep the wider membership informed. I welcome that, provided that necessary confidences are kept. I hope that permanent members, too, have been marked for progress in that area. The United Kingdom has no illusions: it needs — and it has — a constituency in the wider membership as a whole. We look for, and we must earn, the support of the Assembly and its constructive contributions to Council business, whether in the area of troop contributions or general ideas, and we will continue to be as open as possible, beyond formal meetings, in our exchanges with Member States, individually and collectively.

The Security Council has also become more operational and more targeted in its handling of the peace and security agenda. Since September 1999, we have developed — to an extraordinary degree, I think — the practice of sending missions to troubled regions of the world that are on our agenda. The improvements — relative, perhaps, but improvements nonetheless — in the situations in East Timor, which is now our glorious new Member, Timor-Leste; in the Balkans; and in Sierra Leone are evident. Our four missions in successive years to the Great Lakes area, under able United States and French leadership, are at last beginning to bear fruit. In New York we have begun to develop resolutions and mandates that are better tailored to, and more carefully aligned with, the realities. While there is still room for improvement and for more productive exchanges with troop contributors in particular, I believe that we are heading in the right direction. We have to remember that Security Council members, primarily responsible as we are for maintaining international peace and security, are not the only actors in any particular situation. The parties on the ground in a conflict or post-conflict situation have a greater responsibility, and usually a greater opportunity, to make constructive progress than do we in New York. But the Security Council has to show the responsibility, the power and the authority of the United Nations; and we have to demonstrate leadership if it is lacking in the situation on the ground. I believe that there are many instances where the Council has done these things over the past year.

Before I touch on one or two specific issues, let me also comment on the Council's practice of taking up generic themes in our debates. We believe that progress has been made, and significant encouragement given in the right quarters, in our debates on gender issues, on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, on children and armed conflict, and on human rights within the rubric of peace and security.

Again, like so many parts of the United Nations, we are struggling to move from the general to the particular, to produce results that really matter on the ground. But I am pleased that, during the United Kingdom presidency of the Council in July, we were

able to conduct a forward-looking debate on gender issues, which now need to be mainstreamed into the work of the Security Council, and that in addition we managed to hold an interesting workshop on the lessons learnt in Sierra Leone and on how to apply them to accelerate the process of bringing peace and the beginnings of prosperity to the West African subregion as a whole. Every operational organ or the United Nations, not excluding the General Assembly, should conduct self-assessments of its performance now and again.

I want to make a personal comment about the nature of our political work at the United Nations. The Security Council maintains a high profile and receives broad media attention, because it deals with political and security situations of a high intensity, at least in the short term. But the United Nations was never really constructed for — and has only rarely been very good at — resolving political and security issues in short order. The great power, and the great utility, of the United Nations is in setting longer-term trends across a whole range of global issues — economic, social, environmental, cultural and, of course, political, because all these elements have to evolve in a political context.

The commanding underlying theme of the work of the United Nations is development, which means the more equal distribution of the world's opportunities among the world's peoples. Conflict prevention and conflict resolution are, in that sense, a subcategory of our work to promote sustainable development. Members of the Security Council need from time to time to reflect that, important as they may regard their efforts in that Chamber, the results must contribute to the wider success of the work of the United Nations. Mutual cooperation and respect between all the organs and institutions of the United Nations are essential, if we are collectively to be assessed as operating successfully.

Against that background, it remains significant that the lion's share of the Council's work — about two-thirds, in fact — continues to be on African conflicts. The scorecard is mixed. The situation in Sierra Leone is much improved over two years ago, thanks in part to prompt and courageous action by the Council and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), backed up by significant other input, during 2000 and 2001. Ethiopia and Eritrea peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts continue to be modestly encouraging, and I believe that the progress now developing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has, for the first time, the potential to offer the prospect of peace for that troubled country.

But on all three of those issues, much more remains to be done. The situation in Angola has taken a turn for the better this year, and I hope that Angola will benefit from an upgraded United Nations presence and from the engagement of a new Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The news is less good on Burundi, where the Council has not yet found it possible to become fully engaged. And Somalia and the Sudan continue to present the international community with seemingly intractable problems. Africa remains the biggest challenge for the Council's agenda. Britain and France will work in increasingly close partnership to meet it.

The Council did some excellent work on Afghanistan during the period under review. Much of the credit for the change in the situation there is due to the Secretary-General and to his Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi. But the Council moved swiftly to set in place the framework for the International Security Assistance Force and to establish the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Afghanistan is an excellent example of where the United Nations adds value with a light footprint. But the story there is certainly not finished.

The Middle East peace process remains an issue with respect to which the Council continues to have difficulties. Perhaps it is the most troubled of all the issues before the Council. But we have made progress in some respects: monthly briefings from the Secretary-General or the Secretariat; and a greater degree of consensus, or near-consensus, on the decisions of the Council in the period under review than in the period before that. Perhaps we should have been ready to accept that on occasion a rapid press statement may be more effective than a long wrangle leading to failure on more ambitious propositions. The Council needs to focus on where, within the political realities, it can make a difference and add value. I am particularly pleased that the European Union members of the Council have worked well together on this vital issue. More of that will be seen in future.

Another issue in that neighbourhood has risen fast on our agenda recently. Member States will be generally aware of the latest state of play on Iraq. The

issue will shortly come to the Security Council as a whole, but in recent days not even the permanent members have been in a position to do any negotiation in New York. The United Kingdom believes that the United Nations must rise to the challenge on Iraq's repeated violations of international law. Disarmament under United Nations arrangements is the objective. To achieve this, we have to give the United Nations inspectors the strongest powers possible to ensure successful disarmament and to make it crystal-clear to Iraq that, this time, it is complete disarmament or serious consequences. It is important that the Council should consult the membership as a whole before taking action, and the United Kingdom is pleased that the open debate on Wednesday will allow full discussion of the issue.

I should comment, finally, on Security Council reform. The United Kingdom remains committed to achieving a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Our approach at the fifty-sixth session continued to be one of narrowing the areas of disagreement. The United Kingdom regrets that there has been little progress so far this year. Despite all the frustration that is understandably felt, the United Kingdom remains committed to making real progress on Security Council reform during this new session of the General Assembly, and we will support the President of the General Assembly in any constructive initiative which he takes to this end.

But reform does not mean just change in the membership. Continuing improvements in our working methods are equally important. As I have made clear, the United Kingdom supports a Security Council which is transparent and which relates to the wider membership. I would add only that the membership of the General Assembly has to play its part too. General Assembly reform is itself essential, and we must try in our debates to get away from prepared speeches and predictable statements of national position. The United Nations has work to do and results to achieve which make a difference for people riven by conflict and poverty. The way in which we debate and interact can make a significant difference.

Perhaps the constant emphasis from the British on pragmatism, results and cooperation brings smiles to the faces of our colleagues. But does not the United Nations, and do not the billions of people dependent on our effectiveness, now need those things more than ever before?

Mrs. Ahmed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council, under the leadership of the Ambassador Mahbubani, for its ongoing work in the framework of reforming the Security Council in order to increase its membership, achieve equitable representation within it and address related matters. We also thank the Ambassador of Cameroon for introducing the report under consideration.

My delegation wishes to call attention to paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report "Strengthening of the United Nations: An agenda for further change," in which the Secretary-General asserts that no progress has been achieved in the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. Despite the fact that the General Assembly established the Working Group over 10 years ago, there is no clear understanding on how to improve the Council's working methods or increase its membership. This failing will have a negative impact on the general concept of international peace and security.

The process of reforming and strengthening the Organization cannot be completed if it does not include one of its most important organs, entrusted with allaying threats to international peace and security, as provided for in Article 24 of the Charter, which assigns the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization.

The reform of the Security Council is one of the main challenges facing the United Nations at the dawn of this millennium, despite the fact that States are agreed on the need to change the Council's composition. Regrettably, however, there has been no clear agreement on the form which such changes are to take. It is now up to the General Assembly, the supreme organ of the United Nations, to present practical proposals and in-depth analyses and to make recommendations on matters related to international peace and security.

The improvement that has been made to the Security Council's work by increasing the number of

its plenary and open meetings, thus making it more open, effective and transparent, is insufficient. In this context, we urge the Council to open all of its meetings and to eschew secrecy. This will bring further integrity and transparency into its work. The Council must respond to earlier proposals that it engage in consultations with the General Assembly and other bodies of the United Nations, such as the Economic and Social Council, and that it present periodic reports to the Assembly, as necessary. It is truly essential that the Council's decision-making process be improved in order to promote even more openness and transparency.

The principle of equitable representation is set down in the United Nations Charter. It is imperative that this principle be taken into account in all matters relating to recruitment, appointment and election to various seats in various bodies. In this context, we would emphasize the African position, defined at the meeting of African leaders during the Millennium Summit and at other African summits on this issue, on the reform of the Security Council and increase in its membership. This position calls for the continent to be assigned two permanent and non-permanent seats. In this context, we point to the large increase in the membership of the United Nations, which now stands at 191 States, most of them developing countries.

The use of the veto is incompatible with the concept of justice and equality that is called for in relations among States and highlighted by the Charter. Adopting Security Council resolutions through dialogue and consensus is the best way to ensure transparency, integrity and justice. We therefore join others who share the opinion that the right of veto, as a contravention of established principles, should be abolished and that the arbitrary use of this right should be limited until that comes about. This will help to secure more equitable representation within the United Nations, in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality among nations and other relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter. The comprehensive reform of the Security Council to which we all look forward cannot be achieved if some States continue to uphold their narrow interests at the expense of the reform process.

In conclusion, I wish to stress the importance of establishing a balance and of activating cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council. This will preserve the genuine expression of the will of the international community, represented most fully by the General Assembly, including in the search for solutions to problems which the Security Council has hitherto failed to solve. Prominent among these issues is the situation in the Middle East and the need to put an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): As I look around the Hall, I must confess that I regret the poor turnout we have this morning. When we walk in the corridors, the most frequent complaint we hear is that the Security Council is not open and transparent. Here, at a time when we have an opportunity to discuss the Security Council, there is such a low turnout. I hope that, in the course of the day, the turnout will improve.

In two and a half months, Singapore will complete its term on the Security Council. The question we are most frequently asked is this: "Well, how has the experience been?" Clearly, it is not easy to summarize what has been a rich and complex experience, but we have found a helpful analogy, which, like all analogies, is necessarily imperfect.

Joining the Security Council, especially for the first time, as it was for Singapore, is like suddenly jumping on a moving train. We scramble into the last compartment. The train keeps moving on rapidly, often at a quickening pace. We move from compartment to compartment, trying to understand the inner workings of one of the most important vehicles of international peace and security, but in two years we do not quite make it into the engine room. Certainly, we never make it into the driver's seat.

When the two years are up, we will be thrown off this moving train. It will keep on moving with five new passengers. We are not giving away any great secret if we reveal that the main directions of this train are set by the five permanent occupants. How could it be otherwise? I want to add, however, that even the permanent occupants have found the need to adjust to a rapidly changing international landscape.

Over time, we have found that it has become easier to look into the compartments of the train, whether you are inside or outside. More open meetings have been held; more wrap-up sessions have been held; more briefings have been provided; and certainly the Counter-Terrorism Committee, under the leadership of Sir Jeremy Greenstock, has been a model of openness and set new standards for Security Council transparency.

In that regard, let me mention that the latest terrorist attack, in Bali, only reinforces the importance of the battle we are fighting against terrorism. We condemn that attack. We also offer our condolences to the families that lost their loved ones.

This year's annual report clearly signals a significant effort by the Security Council to respond to the concerns expressed by Member States at the Assembly's annual debate on this item. I will not go into the details of the changes, because the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, already spelled out the changes in a statement he made earlier today. But I would like to point out that it is nice to see the report go from its size last year to its present size — I think it is about half the size of what it was last year. I also want to thank those who have commended Singapore for its contributions in that regard.

But the most significant innovation is not found in the report. Instead it can be found in the provisional verbatim record of the Security Council meeting that took place when the report was adopted, on 26 September 2002. That record is contained in document S/PV.4616. As the President of the Security Council said earlier, we should also refer to this document when we participate in the debate today. We hope that this document will be read carefully by all participants. Let me explain the significance of that provisional verbatim record. Last year, when the Council met on 18 September 2001 to adopt its annual report (A/56/2), both Ambassador Valdivieso of Colombia and I were surprised that the report was being adopted without any discussion. As Ambassador Valdivieso said last year,

> "we should not limit ourselves to hearing an explanatory statement from the Secretariat — from Mr. Fall — but ... members of the Council should also make comments on the subject." (*S/PV.4375, p. 3*)

Fortunately, this year Ambassador Valdivieso's wish has came true. This year, for the first time ever, all 15 members of the Council made comments, both on the report and the work of the Council. Many incisive and insightful comments were made. In the full text of my statement I cite the comment made by Ambassador Gerard Corr of Ireland. I will not read it out, but members will notice that he makes an important point, namely, that the world that the Council deals with in the issues on its agenda is inherently untidy in many respects. I want to add that the same untidiness and complexity about which Ambassador Corr spoke bedevilled our efforts to try to improve the annual report. We thought last year that reducing the size of the report should have been an open and shut case. Unfortunately, we met heavy resistance, for reasons we do not yet fully understand. Of course, we discovered that the Council is a conservative institution. But I also want to add here the comment made by Ambassador Levitte on 26 September 2002:

> "If we take a look at the development of the Security Council's working methods since its creation more than 50 years ago, we can see that we have gone from a period of hibernation to a period of increasingly rapid development." (*S/PV.4616, p. 7*)

I noticed that he was quite honest in talking about hibernation. He then added that "If we compare the Council to the General Assembly, we could say that in this friendly competition, the Council has taken the lead." (*ibid.*)

One question that we need to ask in assessing this year's annual report is clear: have the innovations gone far enough? The simple answer is obviously not. Some manifest absurdities remain in the present report. Look, for example, at page 191 of the report, where, as Ambassador Valdivieso has said, there is a laughable description of the Council's consideration of the Nobel Peace Prize. Pages like that can clearly be removed from the report. We hope that next year's report will again be half as thin as this year's report. We think it can be done. Unfortunately, we will not be there to do it.

Despite the enormous time and effort we have put into trying to transform the report, one key point we would like to make is that the General Assembly does not need to rely solely on this report to assess the performance of the Security Council. Certainly, it helps to get the perspective of the passengers on the train. But often those watching from outside can see the direction of the train more clearly than the passengers in the train. In the case of the Council, the results of the Council's work — both its successes and failures — are clearly visible and tangible. In our statement today we will not do what several other delegations will be doing: looking at specific items regarding the Council's performance, its successes and failures. In a statement we made in December 2001 we

gave an assessment of the successes and failures for that year. In that regard, I urge members to look at document S/PV.4445, of 21 December 2001.

We also stated our views in connection with the successes and failures over the past year in our statement in the Council on 26 September 2002 (see document S/PV.4616), so we will not repeat what we said then. But we want to suggest that as we assess the performance of the Council, it may be useful if all of us could try to arrive at some agreed criteria for how we should assess the performance of the Council. In this regard, when we spoke in the Council on 26 September 2002, we suggested four questions. They are on the record, but let me just mention them quickly.

The first question is an obvious one: has the Council successfully managed the issues under its purview? Have lives been saved or improved by the Council's work? Secondly, has the Council improved its procedures and working methods to generate greater efficiency and effectiveness in its work? Thirdly, has the Council become more transparent and open in its work and in its relationship with the wider United Nations membership? Fourthly, has the Council enhanced or diminished its credibility and prestige in the international community? At the Council debate on 26 September 2002, Ambassador Greenstock suggested an additional question. He asked "whether the Council has responded adequately to the greater demands put upon it by the process of globalization" (*S/PV.4616, p. 11*). He added that we have to recognize that the world is moving faster than the Council.

That indeed is the central challenge of our times. The world is certainly racing ahead. The multilateral institutions are either standing still or moving slowly. Each institution should evaluate what it has to do to catch up. Hence, as one of the two suggestions we provided on 26 September 2002 to improve the performance of the Council, we said that the Council should do more strategic reviews of its work, more often than the one time we do so when we meet in the annual retreat with the Secretary-General. Indeed, it is surprising for a body as important as the Security Council not to meet more often to engage in an overall strategic review of its work.

That is, again, why we are glad that the President of the Assembly has decided to cluster the two items today. Items 11 and 40 go hand in hand. The expansion of the Council — on which there is no longer any debate; we all agree that it should be expanded — goes hand in hand with its performance. The purpose of the expansion is to enhance performance, not to diminish it.

For the record, I should say that we have expressed our well-known views on Security Council expansion. We will not repeat them today, as they are in our past statements. But we want to emphasize one dimension, namely that to achieve enhanced performance we have to address squarely the question of the veto. Again, the full of this statement includes an extended quotation from Inis Claude's classic book entitled *Swords Into Ploughshares*. In that book the author talks about the understanding that was reached when the veto was created. Perhaps one of the key points he makes is that that the third objective was "to gain assurance that the most powerful members would initiate and support positive collective action within and on behalf of the organization in times of crisis".

The point here is simple and clear: the purpose of the veto is to promote collective, not national, interests. There was, I guess, from the beginning, and even now, an implicit social contract. The power of the veto was conferred by the Members that ratified the Charter of the United Nations. In return they expected the veto to be used to promote collective security.

Herein lies the nub of the problem we face. All Members of the United Nations, both the veto-bearing and non-veto-bearing Members, have made a commitment to promote the principles of the United Nations Charter. Yet each time we cast a vote, whether in the General Assembly or the Security Council, more often than not we put our short-term national interests ahead of our long-term collective interests. This is a deep structural problem that undermines the performance of both the Security Council and the General Assembly.

I want to conclude by citing one simple example of how this deep structural problem seriously cripples efforts to improve the performance of the Security Council, a goal that we all ostensibly share. The only effective way to improve the performance of any organization, whether it is in business — certainly in the last few months we have seen how confidence in this sphere can be dramatically eroded — or in government or non-governmental organizations is to hold the organization accountable. So, too, the Security

Council has to be held accountable. The only question is, who is going to hold the Council accountable?

The only effective way to hold the Council accountable is to commit a large amount of resources to monitoring its work. It is important to recognize that the growth of that work has exploded in recent years, both in quantity and complexity, and hence a significant amount of resources, both material and intellectual, will be needed to adequately monitor and assess the performance of the Council. I can say this having served as a member of the Council for the past 22 months. Even as one serves as a member, it is almost impossible to follow everything that the Council does because of its different working groups, sanctions committees and the other sub-bodies of the United Nations. Therefore a tremendous amount of resources will be required in order to really monitor the Council. The question here is, who will do the job? One obvious candidate is the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform.

While we emphasize the importance of accountability, I want to stress that the pursuit of accountability will serve the interests of both the Security Council and the General Assembly. For the Security Council, greater accountability will inevitably lead to an even better performance and, consequently, to greater prestige and standing on the world stage.

The General Assembly, on the other hand, provides the legitimacy that ensures international compliance with Security Council decisions. Without the General Assembly, the Security Council would be essentially half a body. Hence there is an essential symbiotic relationship between the Council and the Assembly. Each needs the other. The greater the trust and confidence between these two vital organs of the United Nations, the better the international system will be. Therefore it serves the interest of both to equally promote the pursuit of accountability.

Finally, as we did last year, under the Irish presidency of the Council, this year the Council will, under Cameroon's presidency, discuss the comments and suggestions raised at this Assembly general debate, reflect on the key points made and consider further improvements to the Council's working methods, its work and future reports.

Last year the Singapore delegation rendered a small service to the Council by compiling all the summaries of the statements that were made during this debate and distributing them to members of the Security Council. We will be happy to provide the same service this year.

We will do our best to contribute to the discussions in the Security Council to maintain and improve the relationship of trust and confidence between the General Assembly and the Security Council. As I said earlier, the President has made a major contribution by clustering these two agenda items together. Both in symbolic and in substantive terms, the Council has sent a clear message that the Security Council and the Open-ended Working Group need to cooperate closely. We hope this will happen in the coming years.

Mr. Siv (United States of America): Let me first express our condolences to the Indonesian and Australian delegations, as well as many others for the hundreds of innocents killed in the brutal attack in Bali over the weekend. We mourn for those killed and pray for the injured of every nationality. Nothing can justify this terrorist act. The United States will stand with you in ensuring that those who committed this are brought to justice.

The United States is committed to strengthening the Security Council and to help it perform its important functions more effectively. Enlarging the Council is a means to that end, not the end in itself. A reformed Council, with Japan and Germany assuming permanent seats and with an expanded number of rotating seats, would better enable the Council to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter.

The Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform is entering its ninth year of deliberations. This is indicative of the complexity of the issues that remain to be resolved. They include a balancing representation between the developed and developing countries, achieving appropriate and equitable representation among regions and ensuring that Council enlargement does not curtail its ability to act promptly and decisively.

Despite these challenges, we want the Open-ended Working Group to succeed in building as broad a consensus as possible. To move forward, it is necessary to seriously analyse the various models for an expanded Council, to determine how to make it stronger and more effective. This will require genuine and broad support. To get there, we cannot divorce the

discussion from issues of the expanded Council's ultimate size and composition. Doing so merely ensures more delay.

It will come as no surprise that we will continue to oppose efforts to limit or eliminate the veto. These initiatives only serve to stifle progress on the important task ahead of us. The veto remains an essential element of the Council's ability to maintain international peace and security.

In bolstering the effectiveness of the Council, the United States will work through the Open-ended Working Group and in any discussions to ensure that the Council continues to be the lynchpin of international peace and security. We will also join with others in making the Council more transparent and representative of the entire membership. That is important work, and we are fully engaged. We hope that we can make real progress on all these issues in the coming session.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Stagno (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): The pursuit of security poses a dilemma. As the Secretary-General wisely noted, no State can increase its level of security to the detriment of others. Inevitably, other States construe as a veiled threat any unilateral action aimed at acquiring greater guarantees of security. Absolute security for one State necessarily means absolute insecurity for others.

This dilemma can only be solved through multilateral action. It is impossible to ensure the sovereignty of one State at the expense of the sovereignty of others. All nations have an equal right to sovereignty, in a climate of mutual respect and cooperation. Only joint action will enable us to attain — jointly — greater security, peace and freedom.

In this context, the Security Council is the only universal mechanism that makes it possible for all of us collectively to enjoy true security. We must not allow the Council to be weakened by unilateral action. We cannot accept the Council's exclusion from the most important decisions of international peace and security, thus eroding its authority. We cannot consent to it becoming an instrument of a small group of States, thus losing its legitimacy. We cannot accept the concession of additional privileges to the permanent members or the exclusion of the elected members from the decision-making process, who thus lose their representation.

The world expects greater leadership from the United Nations. The people demand firm and decisive action of the international community. For that reason, we must support and strengthen the Security Council. All States must scrupulously observe the absolute prohibition of the use of force. The Security Council must never transfer, abandon or renounce its primary responsibility to maintain peace and security. The members of the Security Council must always act in the spirit of the principles embodied in the United Nations Charter. Their actions should never be motivated by internal political considerations.

In previous years, my delegation was highly critical of the work of the Security Council. We questioned, in particular, the creation of peacekeeping operations without the necessary human and financial resources as well as the imposition of sanctions regimes that harmed the innocent civilian population. The situation has changed. Recently, we have witnessed the adoption of more realistic mandates in keeping with the resources available. Undoubtedly, the Security Council has learned from its mistakes.

However, we fear that this newly found caution might have led the Security Council to shirk from its primary responsibility of facing firmly, decisively and courageously all threats to international peace and security. We believe that the Council did not do all that it could have done to solve the most recent crises in the Middle East, in the Indian subcontinent and in Afghanistan.

It is essential that the Security Council today assume all its responsibilities. It cannot continue reacting to political and military crises with feeble declarations to the press. It cannot continue condemning massive violations of human rights with empty declarations and ephemeral commitments. This organ must take up again the leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) gave us new hope. It is evidence of the capacity of the Security Council to face new challenges as long as the necessary political will exists. We would like to see the same readiness and commitment in the implementation of all the other resolutions adopted by this organ, including those on the various arms and diamonds embargoes.

In the long run, increasing the Security Council's legitimacy and its capacity for action is vital. In this context, the process of the reform and revitalization of the Council plays a central role in the design of the future structure of the international community.

The work of the Security Council must be genuinely transparent. We have noted the efforts to hold a greater number of public meetings. However, most of them are devoted to the consideration of general topics, which, by their nature, correspond to the General Assembly, the main deliberative body of the Organization. True transparency will be attained only when the consultations among the Council's members and the periodic presentation of reports by the Secretary-General or his representatives are held in public meetings.

The reform of the Security Council must transform it into a more representative and democratic organ. Unfortunately, its efficacy has been limited by the most serious injustices in its composition, working methods and decision-making process. The current structure of the Security Council does not reflect either the current composition of the international community or the present distribution of power among nations. In particular, it is essential that the Security Council reflect not only the military capability of the various actors in the international community but also their economic influence and, above all, their moral authority.

Costa Rica favours an increase in the membership of the Security Council to make possible the greater representation of developing countries in that organ. However, an increase in the Council's membership is only a secondary and subsidiary aspect of the reform and revitalization process. The regulation, limitation and eventual elimination of the veto must be the main goal of the reform process. The existence of the veto right as a unilateral privilege is in itself an affront to the basic principles of justice. That unjustifiable and anti-democratic privilege has paralyzed the Council and has contributed substantially to the erosion of its legitimacy.

We cannot talk of a genuine reform of the Security Council unless those imbalances are corrected. Regrettably, after nine years of negotiations reform efforts have yet to bear fruit. We believe it is necessary to reconsider the process in depth.

I wish to conclude by expressing the condolences of the Government and the people of Costa Rica to the people of Indonesia and to the families of all the victims of the abominable terrorist attack in Bali.

Mr. Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, Permanent Representative of Cameroon and current President of the Security Council, for his presentation of the Council's annual report.

Peru is thankful for the efforts to improve the report's presentation. My delegation welcomes especially the introductory chapter as a good starting point for reflection and analysis of the Council's treatment of the issues before it.

However, while this year's report has a more adequate logical order, it still fails to present a clear and integral vision of international peace and security at the present time.

If a person reads a report of the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, for example, whether the reader agrees or disagrees with its assessments, he or she will gain a clear picture of the international economic and financial situation. That is not true in the case of the report of the Security Council.

While it is true that the report of the Security Council is intended for the Member States of the General Assembly, it is no less true that it provides an excellent opportunity to offer the collective society of the world — investors, the academic sector, civil society, students and the general public — a clear and transparent message illustrating the difficulties and lessons learned with respect to the challenges presented to international peace and security.

For example, a student of international relations who would like to obtain an overall view of world security from the report of the principal organ of the United Nations, the Security Council, would become lost in interminable lists of documents, written in near-cryptic jargon or intended for the few who are familiar with such subjects, as we diplomats are.

It is certain that, in this globalized world, the Security Council's intensive work and its principal efforts are not well communicated, are mostly unrecognized and/or are poorly understood. In that context, it runs the risk — as do other organizations or international bodies — of becoming merely a

suspicious entity, lacking real significance, that says nothing to the international community and might be overlooked or superseded by unilateral actions or measures taken by regional bodies.

My country is making these comments because it supports the work of the Security Council and wants to see a Council that is more efficient, more successful, more open to cooperation, more transparent and more understanding of the needs of the international community. Peru believes firmly in multilateralism and in collective security as fundamental mechanisms for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Last year, the Security Council began the fight against terrorism through an interactive process between that body and the rest of the Member States that has been very positive. The Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee, led by Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom, promoted an ongoing and open-ended debate with non-Council members. That is an advance to which my country has contributed through the participation of an expert in the Committee. We should also like these open-ended meetings to continue in the future.

This process can be seen as part of the increase in open Security Council meetings, held both to consider individual topics and to present Secretariat reports on the various items on the Council's agenda. That is another encouraging fact, as is the continuation of the wrap-up sessions, which Peru firmly supports because they offer all States the opportunity to contribute to the development and consolidation of collective international security.

However, that positive aspect has its negative side, which is that the proposals and ideas presented in open meetings do not go beyond the Council Chamber. Why not include a summary of such meetings in the report of the Security Council? That would be valuable information clarifying the status of a particular topic at a particular time. The country presiding over the Council could summarize open meetings. Because of their factual character, including them in the reports of the presidency or of the Council should not pose a major problem.

My country also believes that the Council's report should include the arguments presented by the permanent members of the Security Council that exercise the veto power, in addition to information on Council resolutions that have not been complied with — all as part of complete and transparent information about the Council, not only for the General Assembly, as I have said, but for the entire world. Otherwise, I reiterate, the international community outside the United Nations will not have a clear idea of what is happening in the Council. Such a complete lack of information clearly runs counter to the culture of global access to information in which we live as a result of the advances in telecommunications and in democracy. If good information is to exist, there must also be transparency within the Council itself, where some areas of debate and decision-making seem to be the permanent members' private domain.

I conclude by pointing out that these ideas and proposals have been presented mainly with the objective of strengthening the image of the Security Council, as part of the current process of fostering transparency and democracy that is spreading throughout the world as the new global culture of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to express our sincerest condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the families of the victims of the terrorist attack that occurred in Bali.

This is the first time we are discussing together two priority items on the Assembly's agenda: the report of the Security Council and reform of that body. The results of this first experience will demonstrate in practice whether we should do the same in the future or whether it would be more convenient to return to the practice of two separate debates.

We welcome the new format of the report of the Security Council, particularly the inclusion for the first time of a brief analytical summary. That constitutes a step forward towards the objective of having truly substantive reports on the work of the Council. The Council's report should reflect not only what has been done, but also what it has been impossible to do and why. As Member States, we have the legitimate right and the duty to consider in depth the Council's work and to determine if the Council is really acting on behalf of all and fulfilling, as it should, the lofty responsibilities conferred on it by the Charter.

There is no logical reason why the rules of procedure of the Council continue to be provisional 57 years after the establishment of that body or why they have not been amended in 20 years. Any changes to the

rules adopted by the Council or to those that apply in practice should be set out in the rules of procedure.

It is true that the number of open meetings has increased — that is a positive development. But the closed informal consultations, which are not even provided for in the provisional rules of procedure, continue to be the rule rather than the exception.

Not only must the number of open meetings be increased, but such meetings should provide a real opportunity for the opinions and contributions of non-members to be properly taken into account.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the informative briefings by the Secretariat and representatives of the Secretary-General should take place in public meetings of the Council, not behind closed doors, as almost always happens.

The wrap-up meetings at the end of each month should become an established practice and be open to non-members of the Council in order to permit a genuine interactive exchange.

We consider the open debate on the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Africa to have been positive. At the same time, we wonder why such discussions are not extended to the work of other groups and subsidiary bodies of the Council, such as the Working Groups established to consider sanctions and peacekeeping operations.

We raised concerns in a number of Security Council debates about the increasing tendency of that body to assume functions outside its purview. One particularly dangerous example of action by the Council in an area outside its mandate occurred this year with the adoption of Security Council resolution 1422 (2002) on the International Criminal Court. That resolution extended to an unacceptable extent the authority of the Security Council to amend international treaties — the exclusive right of the States parties to such treaties.

The Security Council is not the appropriate body in which to debate treaty law or the International Criminal Court, for the simple reason that the Charter does not authorize it to do so.

While the Security Council goes beyond its authority on some subjects, we are concerned by its lack of action in other areas, such as the occupied Palestinian territories. It is unacceptable for that body to continue to turn its back on the suffering of the Palestinian people and fail to give serious consideration to the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a multinational protection force in the occupied territories.

We are convinced that many of the problems that currently affect the work of the Security Council can be resolved only by a far-reaching reform of that body. Council reform is certainly the most urgent priority task of the general United Nations reform effort, and the outcome will to a great extent dictate the future of the Organization. The Security Council is not, and cannot be, effective given its current composition and methods of work. It is neither democratic, nor equitable, nor representative. It does not reflect the current global realities nor does it represent the interests of the membership of the United Nations.

Even non-permanent members of the Council are effectively ignored when — as we have seen in recent weeks — permanent members make decisions with regard to questions that are of key importance to the international community and the future of the United Nations.

Nine years after the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group on reform of the Council, very little progress has been made on the key issues of such reform. Today, the membership of the Security Council represents scarcely 8 per cent of the total number of States Members of the Organization, which has increased almost fourfold since 1945.

How can the Security Council fulfil its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security without appropriate representation within that body of two thirds of the world's population living in the developing countries?

It is inexplicable that Africa does not have a single representative among the permanent members of the Council, given that most of the items on the Council's agenda relate to conflicts on that continent, and that there are no permanent members from such a turbulent region as the Middle East.

With a view to rectifying the inadequate level of representation of developing countries, we should ensure the inclusion as permanent members, with the same privileges as the current permanent members, of at least two countries from Africa and two from Latin

America and the Caribbean, as well as two developing countries from Asia.

The anachronistic privilege of the veto should be done away with. No one can seriously argue that the almost 300 times that the veto has been used was in the interests of the international community, to say nothing of the even greater number of so-called silent vetoes or threats of veto, which have frequently determined the course of action in meetings behind closed doors.

We cannot expect real leadership from a body some of whose permanent members, sheltering behind the veto privilege, practise on a daily basis double standards and selective policies that give priority to narrow national interests instead of to the aspirations of the international community.

If the use of the veto is not restricted at least to actions under Chapter VII of the Charter, before being finally eliminated; if we do not do away with the practice of so-called informal consultations by re-establishing open meetings as the main way of holding discussions and taking decisions; if the provisional rules of procedure are not given final shape; if the opinions of non-members of the Council are not properly taken into account; if there is no transparency and democracy; and if we do not put an end to hegemony, there will be no true reform of the Security Council.

I should like to conclude by expressing our sincere congratulations to all the countries that have been elected as members of the Security Council for next year, and to wish them every success in their important work.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like at the outset to express my gratitude for the decision to convene this joint debate on two items of great interest to Members of the United Nations. As we all know, the question of Security Council reform involves more than a mere increase in membership, and is directly related to the working methods of that body and its methods of reporting to the General Assembly, including the annual report on its work, which is currently before us.

We therefore thank Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, Permanent Representative of Cameroon and President of the Security Council for this month, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council. For the first time, the report includes an analytical section on the work of the Council containing elements of interest to all States Members of the United Nations. This year, the members of the Security Council agreed on guidelines regarding the preparation of the annual report. This is an innovation. We believe that the format has been improved, but the report is still far from being the substantive, useful document required by Member States if they are to evaluate the work of that body. Mexico will try to ensure that in future the analytical section of the report includes progress indicators regarding the work of the Council, as well as a section containing proposals for the improvement of its work.

In recent years, a significant number of the members of the Security Council have tried to improve its interaction with all Members of the United Nations, as well as to enhance the transparency of that body. In order to limit the confidential nature of the Council's work, they are improving the dissemination of information regarding its activities and promoting more informative public meetings so as to enable non-members of the Council to gain access to the information that the Secretariat provides on various subjects and to offer their opinions. That would make it possible for them to offer their opinions regarding the Council's decisions. The dissemination of information through statements to the press, informational documents and the Internet, as well as greater interaction between some members of the Security Council and the members of the General Assembly, have contributed to enhancing the Council's transparency.

Mexico, in the context of its work in the Security Council since January 2002 as a non-permanent member, has promoted greater transparency in the working methods of the Security Council, as well as greater democratization in its decision-making process. Mexico has thereby endeavoured to abide by the provisions of article 48 of the provisional rules of procedure, which states that the Council shall meet in public. We hope that the resistance to change shown by some members of the Council is easing and that this will lead to a greater rapprochement between the members of this body and of the General Assembly.

Wrap-up meetings of the Security Council, at which there is an interactive dialogue between members and non-members of the Council, are further proof of increased openness. This has been supported by some countries, but others who do not believe in the

usefulness or the validity of such meetings continue to have reservations on the subject. For this reason, these meetings have not been held as regularly as my delegation would have wished.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretariat, whose contribution made possible the publication in June 2002 of a document regarding procedural developments in the Security Council in 2001, and of an index to notes and statements by the President of the Security Council relating to documentation and procedure. Mexico will work to ensure the institutionalization of the rules and working methods, which have been provisional for more than 50 years.

In connection with the subject of working methods, the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council is contributing to the elaboration of measures to enhance the methods of work of the Council. This is one of the key aspects of the reform package.

In recent years, it has been noted that the positions of a large majority of delegations in the Working Group have led to major improvements in the working methods of the Council. These improvements have been the result of initiatives by non-permanent members wishing to be in the vanguard of change.

As regards the Council's decision-making process, the Working Group has stated, as have the majority of delegations, that the use of the veto privilege should be limited to decisions taken under Chapter VII of the Charter. We hope that we will have the support of all permanent members of the Council in this connection.

As we all know, with respect to so-called cluster I items, which relate to an increase in the membership of the Security Council, the Working Group has before it a broad range of proposals. The formulas proposed vary with respect to the number of new members and the categories of new members. Mexico has made a constructive contribution to this process. We are in favour of an increase in the number of non-permanent members, which would also lead to better geographical representation.

Discussions on this aspect of reform have been intensive and prolonged, but not very successful. This is due primarily to the fact that the numerous positions that have been taken regarding the increase in membership are very varied, and, in the majority of the cases, irreconcilable.

Member States are convinced that there is a need to agree on a broad reform in the Security Council and have been working very hard towards that end. Like the majority of States, the Government of Mexico believes that any decision regarding the reform must be comprehensive and address the issues of an increase in membership, the decision-making process, the question of the veto and an improvement in the working methods of the Council.

In the quest to achieve this goal, we must bear in mind the following questions.

First, rapid or partial solutions, or the establishment of deadlines or set periods for reaching agreement, must be avoided.

Secondly, the goal of the reform is for the Council to become more representative, transparent and democratic. It must be capable of dealing with the challenges of our era.

Thirdly, any reform whose primary goal would be to increase the number of permanent members would only exacerbate inequalities and enlarge the membership of the "club of the privileged", currently made up of five members.

Fourthly, in assigning new seats, new realities must be borne in mind, including the consolidation of the European Union, which is an important protagonist in the international arena; the principle of equitable geographical distribution; and the fact that it is unjustifiable to give special privileges to even more countries.

Fifthly, the real use of the veto and the so-called "hidden" use of the veto by permanent members in most cases has a negative impact on the decision-making process in the Council. The restriction or elimination of this anachronistic privilege must be firmly and decisively promoted.

Negotiations in the Working Group are at an impasse. Nine years of work in the Group have shown that the reform of the Security Council is a highly sensitive subject politically, and for that reason only a plan leading to a general agreement, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 48/26, would be

legitimate. The reform of the Council must lead to greater representativity of the various regions as well as to changes in its working methods, including, as I said earlier, the limitation or elimination of the veto privilege. The veto must no longer be something that is untouchable.

It is a fact that the pace of negotiations in the Working Group is far from ideal. It must be made clear, however, that this is due to the positions taken and the complexity of the subject material and not to the Group's methods of work. The Working Group is, and must continue to be, the appropriate forum for negotiations to achieve an overall reform, in keeping with the General Assembly's mandate. To disband the Group would set a dangerous precedent: it would mean ignoring not only the work that has already done but also its importance as a representative and democratic body of the General Assembly in which participation by all States Members of the United Nations is guaranteed.

We believe that one way of advancing the Group's work would be to agree to work on the increase in non-permanent membership in order to encourage negotiation on the package of reforms and to enable agreements to be reached on the various elements of the package.

The Working Group has sought to find imaginative and innovative formulas for expansion that would lead to an increase in membership, taking into account the increase that has occurred in the membership of the Organization as a whole. This would ensure greater representativeness in the Council and greater legitimacy for its decisions.

However, in this exercise we must not ignore the fact that Article 23 of the Charter clearly defines the criteria for the election of Council members. On that basis, the Working Group must make a greater effort to determine the membership profile of an expanded Council and should not focus solely on mathematical formulas, the contents of which might be subjective. From this perspective, we also believe that the work of the Working Group will be incomplete if we do not know the opinions of the five permanent members of the Council, since they hold the power of veto over any reform and over the terms that they are willing to accept if membership is to increase.

We are confident that the Assembly will appreciate the work of the Group next year to advance the negotiations on comprehensive Security Council reform, in which all States Members of the United Nations will participate.

Before concluding, I should like, on behalf of the delegation of Mexico, to join others who have expressed condolences for the victims of the terrorist attack in Bali.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by thanking the President of the Security Council for October, Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, for his detailed introduction of the Council's report, submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

On behalf of Algeria, I also take this opportunity once again to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council. I am convinced that those countries will not fail to make a constructive contribution to the Council's work.

Consideration of the Security Council's report is the major mechanism whereby the General Assembly, under paragraph 3 of Article 24 of our Organization's Charter, evaluates action by the Security Council throughout the period covered by the report. Thus, the exercise in which we are engaging today should be not a mere formality, but a precious opportunity for our Assembly to consider the Council's activities in depth and to identify measures to be taken to improve its working methods. Such interaction is, indeed, in the interests of the Council itself, which should exploit it by co-opting and making appropriate use of the ideas and innovative and constructive proposals which, I am sure, this debate cannot fail to generate. Following this debate, the Assembly could take any action it may deem necessary, as is its prerogative.

With regard to the format of the document before us, I pay particular tribute to my friend Ambassador Mahbubani and the entire team from the Singapore mission for their efforts to give the report its current format, in response largely to the comments and criticisms made by Member States on the debate we held here on this subject last year. The brief, analytical and precise document before us today is indeed a considerable improvement over the reports of preceding years. It is considerably shorter, which has permitted substantial savings for the Organization and facilitated our reading and understanding.

As to the functioning of the Council, we note that, during the period under consideration, the Council held a greater number of public meetings, in which a greater number of States participated. We also note a net increase in public briefings organized by the Secretariat, allowing non-member States to be better informed on the development of certain issues dealt with by that body. Algeria nevertheless believes that it would be appropriate for the consultations following those meetings to be open on a systematic basis to parties interested or concerned with a view to hearing their opinions. This would give the Council a better understanding of subjects and thus help it take more informed decisions.

We would also note our conviction that the wrap-up meetings, open to non-members following the work of the Council at the end of each month, offer an opportunity for views to be expressed on subjects of interest in an analytical, synthetic, candid and open manner. We believe that this practice should be maintained and encouraged.

With regard to substance, the Security Council's report shows that, over the period under consideration — June 2001 to July 2002 — the Council not only reacted to threats to international and regional peace and security, but also acted directly in addressing a large number of problems affecting the world. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, it firmly and promptly addressed the global threat of terrorism by adopting resolutions 1363 (2001), 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001). It also showed resolve and pugnacity in dealing with the issues of Afghanistan, Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Angola and Burundi.

In our view, the Security Council missions to various conflict zones or to post-conflict areas were very useful in going to the very heart of the problem and in seeking the support and cooperation of the parties concerned. In the Great Lakes region as in Ethiopia/Eritrea, these missions had a positive impact on local actors. In the light of such success, we encourage this type of initiative and action and call for them to be formalized and extended to other conflict areas.

However, we regret to note that, in some cases, the Council has been hesitant to deal with certain issues with the same political will and has not shown the same resolve. More serious yet, we have even noted an implicit sanctioning of non-respect of resolutions by certain Members, which has seriously undermined the Council's authority. We regret in this respect that certain important Council resolutions have remained dead letter and not been followed up. This situation has often encouraged the recalcitrant party to a conflict or any given situation to continue to defy the Council's wishes and to undermine its credibility.

In the Middle East, where the Council has a manifest responsibility, it has been unable, despite the adoption of numerous resolutions, to make any significant progress in encouraging or facilitating the peace process or, indeed, in protecting the Palestinian population in the occupied territories. The case of resolution 1435 (2002), which was painstakingly negotiated and adopted just two weeks ago, attests to the Council's powerlessness to ensure respect for its own resolutions. As soon as the text was adopted, Israel effectively rejected it and declared, in all impunity and with its customary arrogance towards the international community, that it would not take it into consideration.

It is therefore the credibility of the Security Council itself that is at stake. This will be further eroded, if the Council does not manage to reverse the trend and show the whole world that it is capable of assuming its responsibilities in managing and solving the various conflicts that have been on its agenda for a long time. The Council should therefore have a comprehensive policy based on equity and justice. It should adopt a clear and coherent approach to dealing with the issues entrusted to it by the Charter, particularly those related to international peace and security. In other words, there is a need for deep-rooted reform.

It is not just a matter of abstract theory to say that our Organization unfortunately continues to be caught up in the criteria of, and subscribe to, the logic of an agelong gone, despite the fact that the world order established by the Second World War has undergone serious changes, not only in terms of geopolitical structure but also because of the major changes that have taken place in inter-State relations. In the wake of the upheavals in international relations, nine years ago the General Assembly placed the question of the reform of the Security Council on its agenda and established an Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of that issue, with a view to strengthening

the Council's effectiveness and reforming its working methods.

While the Working Group has made some progress with regard to addressing issues pertaining to the Council's methods of work, the Group continues to experience great difficulty as a result of major differences of opinion with regard to reaching a consensus on the more substantial issues, in particular in connection with Council expansion and the use of the veto. It should be noted that the lack of progress, or indeed the blockage, on substantive issues is essentially due to the lack of political will on the part of various countries that have raised further obstacles and pretexts to delay, or even prevent, the emergence of the desired consensus. Proposals and suggestions designed to convince us to give up the ambition of full and comprehensive reform or to try to get us to be satisfied with partial reform for the time being have been advanced at various times. Should we give in to pessimism and accept the status quo or should we redouble our efforts to bring about genuine reform in both the Security Council, so it can better fulfil its mandate, and the General Assembly, so that it may re-assume its prerogatives as the principal representative deliberative body of the United Nations?

My delegation is well aware of the fact that we should not prolong discussions indefinitely on such an important and sensitive issue. We believe that giving up the momentous and noble undertaking of completely reforming the Council would mean a sort of abdication in the face of the difficult nature of the task. We should instead continue our efforts with perseverance and determination to arrive at an acceptable solution that will not compromise the prospects for comprehensive reform.

With regard to improving the functioning and working methods of the Council, my delegation is pleased to note the increasingly active role of the Council in the prevention and resolution of international crises and conflicts. We also note with satisfaction the introduction by the Council of positive measures aimed at creating greater transparency in its work, particularly by opening its briefings by the Secretariat to all Member States. However, we believe that it is necessary for the Council to finally take a decision regarding its rules of procedure and to institutionalize arrangements regarding a number of measures already taken to improve its working methods and transparency, so that the positive changes are not subject to the goodwill of any particular President or member of the Council.

Despite the increasing number of public meetings held by the Council, which we believe in fact increase its effectiveness, we note with regret that closed meetings, in which all important issues are dealt with and during which decisions affecting Member States are taken, remain the customary practice. In fact, closed meetings should be held on an exceptional basis. We also note that those who exercise exorbitant veto power determine the final outcome of the Council's deliberations in advance among them.

My delegation also believes that it is necessary for the Council to consult on a regular and continuous basis with the States and regional and subregional organizations directly or indirectly concerned by the situations discussed by the Council. In this regard, the Security Council should take steps to more effectively implement Article 50 of the Charter, concerning the right of every State to consult the Council if it faces difficulty in the implementation of preventive or coercive measures ordered by the Council. Similarly, and in addition to the new spirit of partnership and cooperation, further efforts should also be made with regard to troop-contributing countries in order to involve them in drawing up the mandate for the forces dispatched by the United Nations.

The Gordian knot of our exercise, which for my delegation is a greater source of concern and frustration, is the total lack of progress on substantive issues. Whether with regard to the size or composition of the Council, the criteria for the selection of new permanent members or even the issue of the veto, to mention just a few issues, the gap separating the positions of different countries, far from converging upon desirable compromises, has in fact grown and become more pronounced, with each State maintaining its own position and no one demonstrating any willingness to give in or be flexible.

On the issue of the veto, my delegation believes that this matter is intrinsically linked to the question of enlargement, whose consideration is at the very heart of the issue of Council reform. My delegation fully supports the idea advanced by almost all delegations that the right of veto is anachronistic, discriminatory and anti-democratic. We would therefore like to see progressive restriction of this privilege, which should be limited solely to matters falling under Chapter VII

of the Charter, until such time as it is eliminated. Until this privilege of a by-gone era is better regulated and eventually abolished, we would hope — although we do not harbour many illusions — that, in the face of urgent pressure from the rest of the world, those who hold the power of the veto will demonstrate pragmatism and utilize the veto only in exceptional circumstances.

With regard to the expansion of the Council, we believe that it is urgent and necessary to correct the current imbalance by ensuring more balanced and equitable geo-political representation and by strengthening the participation of developing countries. In this connection, my delegation would like to reiterate its support for the specific proposals made by the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement, particularly those concerning an increase in the number of Council members. The proposals of the Non-Aligned Movement all demonstrate the wish to strengthen the effectiveness and representative character of this important body.

In addition, my delegation would like to highlight the fact that any enlargement in the composition of the Council should take into consideration the desire expressed by Africa at the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit held in Harare in 1997. In accordance with that position, the Council should be enlarged by 11 seats. As a matter of fairness, and given that Africa is the Council's main priority and that the continent is home to the largest number of Member States in the Organization, Africa should be given two permanent rotating seats having the same privileges as other permanent members and two non-permanent seats to be shared in accordance with the OAU criteria and any future new elements or refinements to be made to those criteria. We consider that an increase in the membership of the Council to at least 26 members would give the Council greater legitimacy, representation and credibility without reducing its effectiveness in any way.

Mr. Schumacher (Germany): I would like to begin by thanking all delegations for their strong support for Germany in the elections to the Security Council. We take this as an overwhelming vote of confidence for German foreign and United Nations policy. Let me assure you once again that our membership on the Council will be guided by the principles of transparency, accountability and reconciliation of interests.

Germany welcomes the progress achieved in streamlining the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly. The report before us is the result of a considerable effort undertaken in the Security Council Working Group on Documentation and Procedures. The cost of the annual report was significantly reduced, which in itself is an important achievement in times of overall budgetary constraints. Most importantly, the report offers a more analytical introduction, highlighting areas where the Council needs to remain engaged and where its decisions remain to be implemented. We encourage the Security Council to continue to pursue that approach in its future reports. The degree to which the Security Council has become more operational and effective in its approach to questions of international peace and stability needs to be positively highlighted. As a future member of the Council we will contribute to those endeavours.

On Security Council reform, I am afraid I can be rather brief. Our position is well known. In this year's general debate, we heard a great number of delegations reiterate their feeling that the composition of the Council no longer reflects the realities of today. It is an overwhelming perception here and outside this Hall, in the academic and the political world, that this Security Council no longer reflects the new geopolitical order of the world. It lacks legitimacy. We fully share that view.

Kishore Mahbubani of Singapore had a much nicer image of a moving train which he jumped on and will have to jump off in two months' time. I hope that this train will stop to reconsider its schedule, together with the railway company. That company is, as I understand it, the Members of the United Nations and the General Assembly.

At the beginning of this session of the General Assembly, we admitted two new Members to the United Nations. That very happy occasion highlighted once again how rapidly United Nations membership has grown over the past 57 years. Membership during that period has almost quadrupled. Neither the changes in contributions to peace and security nor the increasing stake of all regions of the world in international affairs is presently reflected adequately in the composition of the Council. We reiterate our belief that this has to change if the United Nations system as a whole wishes to maintain and increase its authority.

Germany therefore supports an increase in the number of seats in both categories, a review process to assess that reform after a given period of time, a first step towards a veto reform as suggested by Foreign Minister Fischer, and further progress in reforming the Council's working methods, a process which has already gained very positive momentum.

We can only warn against proposals apparently aiming at interim solutions, such as increasing only the number of non-permanent seats and thereby restricting the great regions of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean — and to a certain extent even Asia — to non-permanent seats forever. Interim solutions are makeshift solutions, and makeshift solutions are bad solutions. They run counter to the expressed will of our heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration: "to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects".

While we understand the desire to breathe life into a rather deadlocked reform debate, we believe that heading in the wrong direction would, in the end, only cement forever the present state of affairs. Germany would, therefore, not be able to support such a proposal.

We continue to believe that narrowing and consolidating the various reform options contained in the report of the Open-ended Working Group might be a first step towards embarking on a meaningful Security Council reform. In addition, the question should be raised of whether, after ten years of work, the Open-ended Working Group has not exhausted its means and strength and should receive a new, more focused political impetus and mandate from the General Assembly.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): As have all other delegations, we would like to express our shock at the bombing incident in Bali resulting in numerous deaths and casualties among innocent people. We strongly condemn those acts, and we wish to extend our condolences to the Government of Indonesia and to the families of all those killed or injured in the incident.

Allow me to express my appreciation to the Chair of the Working Group on Council reform established during the last session of the General Assembly, Mr. Han Seung-soo, and the two Vice-Chairpersons, Ambassador Ingolfsson and Ambassador Durrant, for their tireless efforts to ensure the smooth functioning of the work of the Working Group. We believe that the newly elected Chair of the Working Group will certainly guide the work to a positive conclusion. We would also like to thank the Ambassador of Cameroon for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council.

The Chinese delegation has already expressed its views on the annual report. I wish to stress that this year's annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly makes use of a new format that highlights the main points and reduces the report's volume. That is in keeping with the demands and desires of the Member States. It is also a result of the cooperative efforts of the Council members.

In the past year, the working method of the Security Council has been improved through increased transparency and enhanced efficiency. That momentum must be maintained. In the past year, the Security Council, as the primary organ for maintaining international peace and security, has adapted to situations, given prompt consideration to major issues and taken actions at the right time. In particular, after the terrorist acts of 11 September, the Security Council swiftly passed resolution 1373 (2001) and established the Counter-Terrorism Committee, thus providing an indispensable avenue for international cooperation on counter-terrorism.

At this critical moment, when major changes are taking place in Afghanistan, the Security Council has to act in solidarity for important decisions, in playing the major role towards full implementation of the Bonn Agreement and for the elimination of the Taliban and the Al Qaeda base.

Moved by the Security Council, and with the effort of all sides, positive changes have taken place in some of the areas of conflict in Africa. However, the work of the Council is still far from meeting the aspirations of the African countries. The Council should grasp the right time to work harder and give positive support to the African Union and other regional organizations to work for concrete results in the resolution of disputes in Africa.

At the same time, we would like to point out that the role played by the Security Council in the Middle East on the Palestinian question is still not satisfactory, despite the fact that the Council has adopted resolutions and declarations. Nevertheless, the situation in the Middle East has not improved.

Furthermore, the security situation in Afghanistan is still a matter of concern. This remains an issue that the Security Council must face.

In the final analysis, the major issue of international peace and security — how and when the Security Council should effectively assume the role and responsibilities entrusted to it by the United Nations Charter — is still an issue that deserves our deep and continuing consideration.

Allow me now to make some observations on the reform of the Security Council. In the more than 50 years since its inception, the number of Members of the Organization have grown from 51 to 191, the majority being developing countries. As humankind steps into the twenty-first century, the challenges it faces have become ever more complex. While undertaking the sacred mission of maintaining international peace and security, adapting to new situations to better meet new challenges, the Council should keep pace with the progress of time and carry out appropriate and necessary reforms.

The primary task of reform should be to redress the lack of balance in the Council's present composition, so that representation of the developing countries could be increased on a priority basis, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. This is the aspiration of many Member States, as well as the common understanding of the majority of Member States.

Improving the working methods of the Security Council is an important part of its reform. The Council has our support in its efforts to improve its working methods, to increase the participation of non-members and to enhance transparency, while ensuring its efficiency and authority.

In recent years, the Council has made significant efforts, with widely recognized results. The Secretary-General's report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change", states that

> "The Security Council has significantly improved its working methods over the past few years ... The Council has become more transparent, offering greater opportunities for the wider membership of the United Nations to participate in its work. There has been an increased number of open meetings with participation by non-members of the Security Council, briefings for the wider membership of the Organization, and improved arrangements for consultations with troop-contributing countries". (A/57/387, para. 21)

Our delegation believes that, with the common effort of Member States, more progress will be made in this respect by the Council.

The reform of the Council affects the direct interests of all States. The complexity of contradicting interests requires a gradual process of reaching a broad consensus, based on serious study and in-depth deliberations. There cannot be any 'quick fix'. In dealing with this important issue, it is necessary for us to have not only a sense of urgency but also, and even more so, patience and wisdom. At present, the Open-ended Working Group remains the appropriate forum for this discussion.

China is prepared to participate actively in the discussion on Security Council reform and to work with all others for the further enhancement of the role of the Council, so that it can better assume its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security, entrusted to it by the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Jacob (Israel): At the outset I would like to extend our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia, and to the victims and their families for the heinous terrorist attack that was perpetrated on the island of Bali last Saturday. We offer special condolences to the Government and people of Australia, who have sustained the largest number of deaths and injuries. As a people and a country which has been targeted by terrorism for so many years, we share the pain and agony of those who were affected by this latest manifestation of international terrorism.

The State of Israel joins with other Member States in support of reform of the Security Council, both in its structure and its working methods, with a view to more equitable representation and greater transparency that would increase the effectiveness and credibility of this body.

The past 57 years have shown that the world changes, often at an incredible pace, but that the wheels of change revolve much more slowly inside these halls. Since the last expansion of the Security Council in 1965, more than 70 new States have become Member States of the United Nations; the global

structure has been drastically transformed; and the agenda of the international community is far different from that envisaged by the authors of the Charter.

All these changes, when taken together, have influenced the Security Council's capability to fulfil its primary responsibility to the maintenance of international peace and security. The end of the cold war, the advances made in the field of decolonization, and the challenges of globalization have all contributed towards the advancement of humanity as a whole. At the same time, new threats and unseen enemies, such as international terrorism, rampant disease and increasing disparity between the developed and the developing countries, pose a new sort of challenge to international peace and security.

The United Nations must adapt itself to these new realities, and, in the process, the Security Council must change as well. At the same time, we must exercise great care to maintain the effectiveness of the Council.

Israel believes that expansion of the Security Council is important, in light of the marked increase in membership in the United Nations, and in order to more faithfully reflect the vast multiplicity of interests of Member States. What is needed, however, is to strike a proper balance between ensuring that the Council reflects the larger will of the Organization and the need to preserve the Council's ability to meet its responsibilities under the Charter.

Israel further believes that improved access to Council proceedings can only serve the interests of the Organization. Greater reliance on open meetings and more efficient and reliable methods of conveying information to Member States will undoubtedly increase transparency and confidence in the work of the Council. This will not only bring Member States closer to the work of the Council, but also provide greater understanding for the Council's decisions among the international community as a whole.

Israel supports such change insofar as it will advance the Organization towards the ultimate goal of increased efficiency and effectiveness. Such change must therefore reflect general agreement among Member States so as to foster cooperation rather than increase divisiveness.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's belief that the key to greater credibility and effectiveness lies in the Council's ability to embody the broadest range of cultures and opinions while retaining its ability to function coherently and effectively.

Mr. Tayeb (Saudi Arabia) *(spoke in Arabic)*: Allow me first of all, in the context of the consideration of the report on the work of the Security Council submitted to the Assembly, to pay tribute to the Council for its efforts last year to maintain international peace and security.

Likewise, we would like to affirm the crucial importance we attach to the fact that the Security Council is fully discharging its mandate and playing its role in the maintenance of international peace and security in an effective manner throughout the world. Indeed, we believe that we cannot dissociate the active and effective role of the Security Council from the implementation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the re-establishment of peace and security throughout the world. The Security Council's clear determination to preserve international peace and security is pivotal in the process of bringing about peace and prosperity throughout the world.

We deeply appreciate the interest that the Security Council has shown in the question of the Middle East, as reflected in its adoption of four resolutions, most of them unanimously, over the period under consideration. However, we must express our concern at the fact that most of those resolutions have not been implemented, as the report itself shows.

Indeed, the State of Israel has refused to implement the resolutions calling for an immediate ceasefire and for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Palestinian territories. Israel has prevented the deployment of a fact-finding team concerning the atrocities perpetrated by the Israeli forces in the Jenin refugee camp. This refusal to implement Security Council resolutions demonstrates once again that State's scorn for the decisions of the United Nations, the Security Council and the international community. This is a matter of great concern in the context of international relations, as it could undermine the Council's work, effectiveness and legitimacy.

Israel's persistent refusal to implement Security Council resolutions shows its determination to continue occupying Palestinian and other Arab territories and to undermine efforts towards peace in the Middle East.

The Arab side, for its part, has shown a sincere determination to establish peace. This was made clear in particular at the Arab Summit held in Beirut last March, which adopted the initiative put forward by His Highness Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz to establish a comprehensive and just peace in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and to make possible the signing of a peace agreement leading to Israel's full withdrawal from occupied Palestinian and Arab territories; the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with Al-Quds as its capital; and the establishment of peaceful, normal relations between Israel and Arab States.

The day after that decision was taken, Israel perpetrated the worst possible crimes and massacres against innocent, unarmed Palestinian civilians and besieged the legitimate Palestinian Authority.

Given Israel's failure to comply with the Security Council's resolutions and efforts to promote peace in the region, the international community must take the necessary measures in order to maintain the prestige and credibility of the Council. Such action should have the same weight and force as other measures taken by the Council vis-à-vis other States that have failed to comply with its resolutions. Israel must submit to the will of the international community and accept the implementation of the relevant decisions of the Security Council. This alone will be a guarantee of peace, security and stability in the Middle East.

My country has noted with great satisfaction the role played by the Security Council in the strengthening of stability and the settlement of conflicts in a number of regions of the world, including Africa, the Balkans and Cyprus. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fully supports the efforts undertaken by the Council and the Secretary-General to strengthen peace and security in those regions.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fully supports international efforts to combat terrorism, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). My country will spare no effort in pursuing the perpetrators of such acts, as it believes that terrorism poses a threat to all humankind.

However, in this respect we should make clear the following points. First, terrorism is a global phenomenon that does not relate to any single nation, religion or race. We should therefore not attribute it to any people or religion. Secondly, occupation by foreign forces is the worst form of terrorism and should be eliminated just like other forms of terrorism. Thirdly, resistance against foreign occupation is a legitimate act under international instruments and the relevant decisions of the United Nations. Fourthly, in the context of the combat against terrorism, it is not permissible to strike against innocent peoples.

With regard to agenda item 40, concerning equitable representation in the Security Council and other related issues, my country's delegation fully agrees with the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration as concerns the need for continual change, adaptation and learning in the Organization, in order to ensure the continued importance of its role. No reform within this Organization can be comprehensive and complete unless it involves the long-awaited expansion of the Council.

Growing appeals for reform in the functioning of the United Nations, in particular of the Security Council, reflect the feelings of a number of Member States. Indeed, we are still far from attaining the purposes set out in the Charter, and in particular the very raison d'être whereby it was established, namely to preserve succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to promote peace, security, social development and prosperity for all.

The establishment in 1993 of the Open-ended Working Group on reform of the Security Council reflected agreement among Member States on the need to increase the membership of the Council so as to ensure equitable geographical representation and to enhance transparency of its activities. However, we deplore the fact that so much time has elapsed without agreement being reached in the Working Group on several issues, including the number of new Council members, including permanent members, and the question of the veto.

In the context of reforming the Council's working methods and increasing its membership, several issues should be taken into account. First, any reform effort should seek to ensure that the effectiveness of the Council and its ability to deal with threats to international peace and security are not put at risk. Secondly, the role of the Council should not be limited to the maintenance of international peace and security but should include conflict prevention and peace-

building in the aftermath of conflicts. Thirdly, all Member States throughout the world must comply with Council resolutions, without any selectivity. Fourthly, the transparency of the Council's working methods must be increased.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): I should like at the outset to express, on behalf of my Government, profound condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia, to Australia and to the other countries whose nationals were lost, as well as to the bereaved families of the victims of the terrorist bombing in Bali. We condemn the bombing in the strongest terms, and express the hope that the perpetrator or perpetrators of that heinous act will not escape punishment.

My delegation welcomes the clustering of the two items under consideration in an effort to improve the efficiency of the work of the General Assembly. We also wish to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of October, Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, for introducing the fifty-seventh annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We consider the annual reporting by the Council to the General Assembly on its work to be an important occasion for the larger membership of the Organization in order to be better acquainted with the work of the Council during the reporting period. It reinforces the institutional relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, as provided for in Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter. In this regard, we welcome the Council's decision to hold an open meeting last month for the purpose of discussing the report before submitting it to the General Assembly. This reflects the seriousness with which the Council undertakes this annual reporting exercise, as well as the Council's sense of accountability to the larger membership of the Organization, in whose name it acts.

My delegation welcomes the new and improved format of this year's report, which reflects the Council's willingness to improve its method of work and ensure that it evolves in response to the many comments made by the larger membership over the years. We welcome the attempt that has been made to provide an analysis of the work of the Council during the reporting period — an analysis which many delegations had called for in the past. My delegation commends Council members, including the delegations of Singapore, the United Kingdom and others, for their serious effort to improve the format and quality of the report.

We look forward to further improvements in future reports, particularly in the analytical part, with the inclusion of more details of Council decisions and actions, leading to a better understanding of the issues dealt with in the Council. The Council could, for instance, enlighten the larger membership on circumstances that have had an impact on its final decision on a particular issue. A more detailed description of the public and private meetings of the Council — instead of a mere listing of such meetings — would certainly be more helpful to the larger membership. We consider the permanent web site of the presidency of the Security Council to be extremely useful in enabling us to follow the work of the Council.

On the substantive aspects of its work, it is clear that there has been a tremendous increase in the workload of the Council during the reporting period. As in recent years, a major focus of the work of the Council was on Africa, which still demands the full attention of the Council. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the ad hoc working group on Africa, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Koonjul of Mauritius. The Council can certainly claim its fair share of the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize, which was awarded to the Secretary-General and the United Nations as a whole for their contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The successful establishment of the Transitional Administration in Afghanistan, peaceful elections in Sierra Leone and the independence of Timor-Leste are among the outstanding achievements of the Council during the period under review. We congratulate the Council, as well as the men and women from many nations who serve in United Nations missions, for their contribution in maintaining international peace and security.

However, my delegation is disappointed that on the issue of the Middle East and Palestine, the Council has not been able to play the role expected of it. We welcome the fact that the Council has discussed the issue of Palestine with greater frequency, holding several open debates and regular monthly briefings on the situation on the ground. We note that a total of 21 Council meetings were held on that question, and that four resolutions were passed and two presidential statements issued.

Unfortunately, the increase in the number of meetings on the subject did not have an impact on the situation on the ground. Either Israel continued to ignore or manipulate the Council's resolutions or — more often than not — the Council was not able to do anything meaningful because it was prevented from doing so. We strongly believe that had the Council approved the establishment of a United Nations or international monitoring presence in the occupied territories, much of the violence that has occurred could have been avoided and the situation today would be more conducive to a negotiated settlement.

The question of Palestine is one of the oldest items on the agenda of the Council, yet resolving it has not been possible. The failure of the Council to exert its authority on this issue undermines its credibility. It is time for the Council to play a more active role on this issue and to contribute to the amelioration of the situation on the ground.

Another issue on which the Council continues to be at an impasse relates to the situation in Iraq. The unresolved question of Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction has stood in the way of the lifting of the sanctions imposed on that country. The matter is currently being actively discussed once again in the Council — or more accurately, among the Council's permanent members. In dealing with this issue, the Council is facing one of the most difficult and critical moments in its history. Upon its decision may hinge war or peace; this is a decision that will affect not only the people of Iraq, but also the entire international community. Clearly, it is the hope and expectation of all peace-loving nations that the issue can be resolved peacefully through diplomacy rather than through military action, as is being actively advocated in some circles.

On an issue as important as this, it is imperative that the views of all of the members of the Council be brought to bear on its final decision. It is dismaying that, at a time when the Council is opening itself up to the larger membership through its open debates and briefings, the 10 non-permanent, or, more accurately, the 10 elected members of the Council continue to be kept in the dark, according to many of them, as the permanent members have engaged in private consultations among themselves for the past several weeks.

The sidelining of the elected members of the Council is against the very spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter. While it distinguishes between the two categories of membership of the Council, the Charter does not otherwise discriminate between the permanent and non-permanent, or elected members, each of which is entitled to the same right to be consulted on all issues before the Council, even if they do not enjoy the right of veto.

In addressing the question of Iraq, the Council should heed the words of the Secretary-General, who, in his statement to the General Assembly on 12 September 2002, urged us to rededicate ourselves to the principles and purposes of this Organization and to the centrality of the multilateral process. Equally resonant are the remarks made by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, a permanent member, at the Council's open meeting on 26 September 2002, in discussing the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, when he said that:

> "States cannot play a unilateral role in the modern world, but they must play a role that adds power to the collective objectives of the United Nations." *(See S/PV.4616)*

Both of these statements are extremely pertinent at a time when the Council is trying to exert its own authority and that of the United Nations in the process of the resolution of the question of Iraq.

Malaysia strongly supports the call made by the Secretary-General and by other world leaders for restraint and for the peaceful resolution of the issue, so as to spare the Iraqi people further suffering. We hope that all diplomatic avenues will be explored and cooperation extended by all the parties concerned. We urge Iraq to allow the unconditional return of United Nations arms inspectors and to comply with all the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council must act with courage and wisdom and consider all aspects and implications of its action. Its very prestige and credibility hinges on this.

The Security Council should also listen to the views of the larger membership of the Organization. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the decision of the Council to convene an open meeting on this issue on Wednesday 16 October. We look forward to participating in that important debate.

My delegation wishes to congratulate the Chairman of the Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee for his dynamic leadership and the Committee's other members for their contribution towards the effectiveness of the Committee. We also wish to commend all States Members of the United Nations for their cooperation in the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001). This is an excellent illustration of the effectiveness of the multilateral approach when all Member States fully cooperate in the implementation of Council resolutions.

We would have hoped that the same level of cooperation would have been extended by all Member States in the implementation of all resolutions of the Council. Regrettably, this has not been the case. There has been, unfortunately, selectivity in the approach taken to the implementation of Council resolutions and in enforcing compliance without discrimination — a fact to which the Secretary-General has himself alluded. My delegation hopes that in view of the efforts being made to enhance the credibility of the Council — about which much has been said these days — this fact will not be lost on Council members.

My delegation wholeheartedly supports the call made by some members of the Council for the adoption of clear and precise indicators to measure the work of the Council. We believe that one such indicator, which would also reflect the effectiveness of the Council, would be the level of compliance by Member States in implementing the resolutions of the Council.

My delegation regrets that, despite the efforts of Mr. Kavan's predecessor, Mr. Han Seung-soo of the Republic of Korea, and the two Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform, there has been no breakthrough in the Group's work. While the Working Group has contributed significantly to the reform of the Council over the years, particularly in improving its working methods, there has been no progress with regard to the major issues, namely, the expansion of the Council and the question of the veto.

The debate on these important issues continues to be contentious, circular and repetitive, even as we are approaching a full decade of these deliberations in the Working Group next year. It is therefore not surprising that the level of interest has declined in recent years. It has been two years since our heads of State or Government, resolved in the Millennium Declaration to, inter alia, intensify efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Unless there is greater political will on the part of those concerned to move the process forward, these deliberations might well end up as an exercise in futility. The tenth anniversary of these deliberations would be a good occasion for us to take stock of the work of the Working Group and to ponder where we should go from here.

We hope that under the leadership of the current President of the Assembly, a new momentum will be generated in the Working Group, so that something more tangible could be achieved as we enter the tenth year of these deliberations. In the meantime, the progress made thus far in respect of the Council's working methods should be codified — as suggested by the Secretary-General — to ensure that the agreements reached on these issues remain a permanent feature of the Council. This is important for purposes of marking the progress made so far and for purposes of continuity, as, aside from the permanent members, other Council members come and go, once they have served their very brief term.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate the delegations of Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their recent election as the new non-permanent members of the Security Council beginning 1 January 2003. We are confident that they will not only serve the United Nations and the international community well in discharging their responsibilities as members of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, but also enrich the deliberations of the Council.

Mr. Fadaifard (Islamic Republic of Iran): Let me begin by offering my delegation's condolences to the people and the Government of Indonesia and to the families of those who lost their lives as a result of the recent brutal terrorist attack in Bali.

At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou of Cameron, the President of the Security Council, for having introduced the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly.

Having carefully considered the report submitted by the Council, we recognize and welcome the visible improvements made in both its content and format. In general, instead of simply compiling or quantitatively describing its activities, the Council, this time, has

submitted a document that is more analytical and has taken into account basic criticisms levelled at it for many years by the members of the General Assembly. What has been done is a contribution to the improvement of the Council's reporting method. We commend all members of the Council, especially Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore and his team, for pressing forward and accomplishing this outcome.

We note that the report has a new format. It is streamlined, more focused and concise and shorter, avoiding overlapping and repetition, thereby also reducing the cost of its production. Thus, we believe that, to some extent, the present report has rectified a defect in the way the Council previously reported to the Assembly. While it is dramatically reduced in size, it also provides more statistical information on the Council's activities.

As to the content of the report, we are pleased to note an analytical overview in the introduction to the report. This is the most important innovation in the report and represents an effort made this year to address the main criticism repeated year after year in the General Assembly's debate on the Council's report. This section for the first time focuses on areas of Council activities which are of interest to the entire membership of the United Nations.

As the report indicates, a record number of open meetings of the Council was held in the period under review. Apparently, the Council has never in its history held so many public meetings. This is a fact that has had a positive impact on the Council in the area of transparency and openness in its work and its relationship with the wider United Nations membership. It has enabled the Council to provide greater opportunity to non-members of the Council to participate in its work. It is important that the Council build upon this achievement and enhance closer links between the members of the Council and those of the General Assembly. The record shows that, in the period under consideration, the Council also opened up to civil society through Arria-formula meetings, which enable the Council to meet with the representatives of non-governmental organizations. There should be no doubt that the Council is still at the beginning of a long road and that a lot has yet to be done with a view to democratizing its work.

In general, the working methods of the Council, too, have noticeably improved over the past few years. Undoubtedly, the ideas expressed and progress made in the course of the deliberations in the Open-ended Working Group on the reform of the Council played an important part in this respect. Better procedures and working methods can generate more efficiency and effectiveness and bring the Council into tune with the general membership. We believe that the Council missions to regions affected by conflicts are valuable instruments. Monthly wrap-up meetings also provide an opportunity for an interactive discussion among members and non-members, even though there are members who have reservations about such meetings.

We acknowledge that the period under review was extraordinary for the Council in a number of ways and uniquely busy. The events of 11 September set the tone and overshadowed the work of the Council for the whole period. Thus, the Council was expected to play an important role in coordinating the international fight against terrorism. It also needed to deal with the chaos created by the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The swift action of the Security Council in adopting resolution 1373 (2001) and in establishing the Counter-Terrorism Committee was its main achievement with respect to combating terrorism, and a united Council at a critical moment in the history of Afghanistan played an important role through its swift decision in pushing for comprehensive implementation of the Bonn Agreement. From now on, it is important that the Council continue to contribute both to the fight against terrorism, thus enhancing the role of the United Nations in this area, and to upholding the effective engagement of the international community in Afghanistan.

The Council has had its share of successes and failures. While it has thus far been effective in dealing with terrorism and the situations in Afghanistan, East Timor and Sierra Leone, some issues on its agenda clearly need more attention. The Council has had a serious level of engagement with issues related to Africa and there have been some positive developments in African conflicts. However, there is still a gap between the work of the Council and the expectations of African States and people.

The Middle East is the area in which the Council has achieved the least and clearly fallen short of expectations. While we appreciate the fact that there is now a monthly briefing of the Council on the Middle East, we note that the record of the Council on this issue has yet to improve. It has yet to take measures

with a view to implementing its resolutions, the latest of which is resolution 1435 (2002). There is no doubt that the credibility of the Council will erode over time if it is habitually seen to be unable to meet its responsibilities with regard to outstanding issues on its agenda.

Allow me to briefly touch upon the important issue of the reform of the Security Council. Nine years have elapsed since the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group on reform of the Security Council. The debate in the course of the last session of the Working Group has in fact proved that significant differences remain on such substantive matters as the size and composition of the Security Council, especially an increase in the permanent membership, and the power of veto. In other words, the fundamental question as to how to advance from the Security Council that we have now to a more representative and democratic, but no less efficient, organ has yet to be answered.

Nevertheless, the impasse or lack of progress in the expansion of the permanent membership of the Council should be viewed as a direct product of the enormous importance of the issue and the diversity of views and interests. Despite the lack of progress on the main issues, we still believe that the process of the reform of the Council should not be subject to any predetermined and superficial timetable. Any attempt to impose a premature, hasty decision would run the risk of doing harm to that very delicate process, which is so important to all the States Members of our Organization.

We are of the view that, due to the importance of the Council's reform and while respecting the principle of the equality of all Member States, all efforts should be made to reach the broadest possible agreement among the Member States.

As to the objectives of the reform of the Council, we continue to believe that the objective of the reform process is and must remain to make the Council more representative, more democratic, more transparent and more accountable, thereby helping to strengthen its efficiency and to increase its authority and that of the United Nations as a whole. We believe that the attainment of these objectives requires, inter alia, that the membership of the Council be expanded to at least 26 so that the developing world can be better represented.

Moreover, the opinion of the vast majority of the States Members of the United Nations that continue to express their dissatisfaction about the use of the veto as an undemocratic instrument in the decision-making process of the Security Council should be heeded. The general support for limiting and curtailing the use of the veto with a view to its eventual elimination needs to be explicitly reflected in the final outcome of the Working Group.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to inform members that, in a letter dated 27 September 2002 addressed to the President of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations, in his capacity as chairman of the Group of Western European and other States for the month of September, requests that the General Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the Observer of the Holy See in the debate on agenda item 31, "Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion".

May I take it that there is no objection to the proposal to hear a statement by the Observer of the Holy See in the debate on agenda item 31?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.28

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-seventh session

28th plenary meeting
Monday, 14 October 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 11 and 40 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/57/2 and A/57/2/Corr.1)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of my country, I would like to begin by expressing our solidarity with the Government and people of Indonesia and with the family members of the victims of the terrorist act that took place this past weekend. This was an event of great seriousness that will likely attract the attention of the United Nations as it discharges its responsibility in the area of international peace and security.

The joint consideration of these two agenda items is not only appropriate, it is also particularly important to relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly. At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Council, the Ambassador of Cameroon, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council. We would also like to emphasize the fact that this debate is taking place at a very important time, given the successful effort of the Security Council to adopt a new report to the General Assembly on its activities that is more flexible, shorter, more pertinent and, so far as possible, more analytical. That effort was justified in that it promoted greater transparency in the work of the Council; underscored the special responsibility of the members of the Council towards the Assembly, which has been referred to as accountability; and contributed to better functioning of a body whose composition and working methods are often questioned. The changes made in the report were the result of persistent efforts made mainly by the elected members of the Council, namely, those members whom the Assembly has entrusted to represent it.

The criticisms made concerning the format of the report routinely sent to the Assembly were always justified and reasonable. Much of that criticism was expressed in meetings such as the ones taking place during these two days. It has therefore been very satisfying for Colombia, which will very soon conclude its term of office in the Council, to have taken part in this common exercise. We would like to emphasize the role played by Singapore and other members who always demonstrated keen interest in the subject. Among the permanent members, a special tribute should be paid to the United Kingdom, which has shown great willingness to consider reforms in the working methods of the Council in a constructive spirit.

As we have said in the Council, the adoption of the new report is a lesson to the members of this

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principal organ, whether permanent or elected, that these things can be done without disrupting the political situation. It is also a lesson for the Secretariat, which at the beginning expressed doubt, saying that it was very uncomfortable about such an exercise.

However, we can only be pleased with the new report when it achieves the only thing that is truly of importance; that is, when it shows that it has contributed in a better way to a situation whereby the members of the General Assembly and members of the international community are enabled to critically observe the work of the Security Council. The report in its new form must now contribute to this new critical vision, promote a more informed debate and make it possible for members of the Council to work in such a way that the rest of the membership of the United Nations can examine its work more constructively.

However, all we can say thus far is that the changes have been of limited effectiveness. That is why it would be very useful to continue making reforms when possible — reforms based on suggestions and proposals that are set forth in debates like the one being held today, as well as on the renewed commitment and solidarity of the voice of the General Assembly in the Council.

When considering the last report in relation to other innovations, we believe that the proposal by the Secretary-General in document A/57/387 on the codification of changes that have taken place as working methods is very appropriate. This exercise makes political sense and would be a major contribution to transparency without damaging the provisional rules of procedure.

During the period covered by the report, the Security Council has been faced with many challenges. There has been the collapse of the Taliban regime and the installation of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan; measures have had to be taken against international terrorism in the Security Council Committee established by resolution 1267 (1999), presided over by Colombia, and the Counter-Terrorism Committee, presided over by the United Kingdom. There have also been changes to the presence of the United Nations in East Timor following its independence; the impasse in the conflict in Angola has moved forward after the death of Jonas Savimbi, and there are now new efforts to bring about peace in that country; and there have been presidential elections in Sierra Leone, with the participation of the Revolutionary United Front as a political party. I would like to point out the first positive signs regarding general political agreements and the beginning of the withdrawal, which must be final, of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Finally, I want to highlight the decision of the committee on borders between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the situation regarding security in Somalia and the possibility for a process of reconciliation.

Perhaps it may be too early to give a critical and wise assessment of these actions, but in all the cases that I have mentioned, the success or failure of the Council will depend largely on the motivation that it has in the coming months and years. There must be a real commitment in the Security Council to defend collective interest, and overcome the temptation to act in exclusive ways favouring only national interests or lesser goals.

I will conclude with a few comments regarding the reform of Security Council. The progress that has been made in Cluster II can lead to a more realistic debate on this topic. It is recognized that the expansion of the Council continues to be a contentious issue. But if you, Sir, encourage the members of the Council to hold a dialogue on more realistic goals, perhaps we may be able to agree on an expansion for the non-permanent members. This could be accompanied by an intensification of efforts in favour of constructive reforms in working methods which should be consistent with the overall approach taken to the subject as described in the Millennium Declaration.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): Allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to express our heart-felt condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the families of the victims of the explosion that took place in Bali. Our deepest sympathies also go to all the countries whose nationals were victims of this tragic event.

The consideration of this item this year is different in many respects. First, the format of the report of the Security Council has been reconfigured in response to the views expressed and suggestions made by Member States. Secondly, the two reports have been clustered together for a joint debate, which brings harmony and logic to our consideration of these two very pertinent issues. Lastly, and perhaps even most important, this joint debate is taking place at a time

when a cloud of war hangs over our heads, and when action or inaction in the Security Council could make the difference between war and peace.

It is the hope of my delegation therefore that the Security Council will indeed take into account the views that will be expressed over the next two days. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain for their election to the Council.

For nine years, the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other Matters Related to the Security Council has been deliberating on how to make the Council democratic, representative and responsive to the needs of all Members of the United Nations.

The question needs not be asked as to how much progress has been achieved from one General Assembly session to another. It has become ritualistic for preceding Assembly sessions to take note of the report of the Working Group, welcome progress made and decide that the succeeding General Assembly session would continue consideration of Security Council reform through this Working Group.

During the second session of the Working Group, discussion with Council members stressed progress in the work of the Council on its reforms. Indeed, some steps have been taken with regard to the working methods of the Security Council. These include improvements in the Arria formula, meetings with troop-contributing countries and other countries contributing to peace-keeping operations, briefings by the President of the Security Council to non-Council members, availability of draft resolutions and summaries of meetings and informal consultations of the whole.

These are all welcomed measures adding value to the Security Council reform process. However, they do not address the core of the problem: the imbalanced decision-making process of the Security Council. What developing countries need is their democratic right to participate in decision-making on issues of international peace and security.

Let me recall that General Assembly resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, among other things, recognized in its fifth preambular paragraph,

> "the need to review the membership of the Security Council and related matters in view of the substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations, especially of developing countries, as well as the changes in international relations".

The resolution refers to the increase in the number of developing countries, which constitute the overwhelming majority of the Organization's membership. It cites changes in international relations because those changes make up the agenda of the Security Council and, almost without exception, either affect or happen mostly in developing countries, especially in Africa. So it is logical that developing countries call for appropriate representation on the Security Council. In that context, Namibia stands by the decision of the African Union that Africa deserves two permanent and five non-permanent seats on the Council. Africa's decision that the two permanent seats for Africa will be filled on a rotational basis demonstrates the collective, representative and democratic spirit in which Africa is pursuing this vital issue.

Security Council resolution 1234 (1999) affirms, inter alia, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Democratic Republic of Congo and calls for the withdrawal of uninvited forces from the territory of that country. We welcome the latest developments in that regard. We applaud the recommendation of the Secretary-General to increase the personnel of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and we call on the Council to implement that recommendation. We look forward to the report of the Council on the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and express our desire to see the Council take appropriate action so that those resources can benefit the rightful owners — the people of the country.

On Angola, we note the agreement in the Council to review the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Angola. It is our hope that all required assistance will be made available to assist the Angolan people in the consolidation of peace. In that context, we call on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need in Angola.

The successful elections held in Sierra Leone are only the beginning of the consolidation of peace-

building. The situation around Sierra Leone calls for the continued presence of the United Nations and the engagement of the international community in that country.

On 27 September 2002, we finally and joyfully welcomed the sovereign and independent State of Timor-Leste to the community of nations. We congratulate the people of that country for that noble achievement. The President of Timor-Leste, in his address during the admission of his country, paid tribute to the United Nations and the international community at large for having assisted the people of Timor-Leste in realizing their right to self-determination.

He further went on to say that the people of Western Sahara also deserve their right to self-determination. Therefore, the fundamental question we have to ask ourselves is what did the Security Council, in particular, do in the case of Timor-Leste which it needs to do in the case of Western Sahara? Is the international community showing the same resolve on the implementation of the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara and the right to self-determination of the Saharan people?

Let me point out that in the report of the Security Council under discussion, Western Sahara is referred to only in the introduction and is entirely omitted from the activities relating to all questions considered by the Security Council under its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We ask that this serious omission be rectified. Namibia calls on the Council to see to it that the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara is implemented. The Secretary-General should therefore continue to work towards that end.

The report of the Security Council rightly points out that the Council broke new ground with the Counter-Terrorism Committee in the degree to which it has engaged in cooperation with every Member State in the follow-up to Council resolution 1373 (2001), including help to Member States seeking technical and financial assistance. We underscore the need for the Security Council to follow through, among other things, with providing assistance to developing countries in the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001).

Namibia firmly believes that all Security Council resolutions must be implemented by the relevant parties, failing which the Council and, indeed, the entire Organization loses credibility. But when the Security Council unanimously adopts four resolutions on the Middle East during the period under review and none of them see implementation, what message does this send to the parties, and especially to the Palestinian people, whose only hope rests in the implementation of the Council resolutions? The Council must do all it can to help bring about peace in the Middle East.

On Iraq, the report of the Security Council states, inter alia, that the Secretary-General's dialogue with Iraq was renewed and that members of the Council were supportive of that process. My delegation sees merit in that process and urges its continuation.

In its efforts to make the work of the United Nations more transparent, the general membership has had opportunities to make their views heard before the consideration of Council resolutions. That was certainly the case with Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, and the presidential statement on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, to mention but a few. Security Council resolutions are binding on all Member States. Decisions in the Council are taken by a few in the name of all Members of the Organization. It is only logical, therefore, that the Council hears the views and opinions of the larger membership before it adopts resolutions, especially those under Chapter VII of the Charter, which are enforceable.

The democratization and enlargement of the Security Council should be seen as an integral part of the overall reform of the United Nations. Hence, we cannot open up the rest of the United Nations system and leave the Security Council intact. The indefinite deferral of the enlargement and democratization of the Security Council will amount to the gradual erosion of its prestige.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): Allow me, through you, Sir, to extend the sympathy of my delegation to the people of Indonesia for the tragic events that took place in that country very recently.

I wish to express our appreciation to the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cameroon, for introducing the report of the Council to the General Assembly. I also take this opportunity to congratulate Spain, Germany, Pakistan,

Chile and Angola on their election as non-permanent members of the Council for 2003 and 2004.

The report of the Security Council provides an invaluable insight into the activities the Council undertook last year. According to the report, the Council held 192 formal meetings, comprising 159 public and 33 private meetings. Eleven "Arria formula" meetings were also held with representatives of non-governmental organizations, academia and the media. The Council adopted 73 resolutions and issued 45 presidential statements. Furthermore, the Council held consultations of the whole, considered numerous reports of the Secretary-General and reviewed and processed documents and communications from States and regional and intergovernmental organizations.

The report, which highlighted such issues as the maintenance of international peace and security and the working methods of the Security Council, represents the effort of the Council to make itself accountable to the membership of the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of Article 24 of the Charter.

Nigeria is encouraged by the fact that the Council has begun to respond positively to the demand that the report be more analytical, concise and easy to read. There has been a significant reduction in the size of the report, and more statistical information is provided. The introduction, which summarizes activities of the Council as they relate to specific conflict areas of the world, is welcome, as it makes the report easy to read and the information easy to access. We commend this new format and urge that more improvement be made as the work of the Council progresses.

My delegation would like to address the following specific headings in the report.

First, there is the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security. The issue of conflicts and the maintenance of international peace and security continue to pose enormous challenges to the Security Council. We note that, while the Council has succeeded in making progress in the resolution of some conflicts, as reflected in the noticeable increase in the number of peace agreements, the Council, in conjunction with the international community, still needs to do more to make the world a peaceful place in which to live. In this regard, Nigeria endorses the involvement of the wider society, including subregional and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions and developmental agencies, in the process of conflict prevention, management and resolution. Their collective contributions no doubt substantially help in the reduction of socio-political and economic pressures, the diffusion of which often leads to violent conflict or, sometimes, war.

On the subject of Sierra Leone, we note the progress made since the conclusion of democratic elections in that country. We support the Security Council's Adjustment Withdrawal Plan and hope that caution will be applied in the implementation to ensure that the security of the country is not impacted negatively.

We call on the Council to assist in the completion of the integration of ex-combatants. Assistance should also be extended to the training of Sierra Leone's police and army, which would be totally responsible for maintaining security in the country following the withdrawal of United Nations troops. The Sierra Leone Government should further be assisted to establish an effective civilian administration and political institutions, particularly the courts, that will ensure practical implementation of the rule of law.

Nigeria endorses the Security Council's efforts in addressing a complex humanitarian political and security situation in the Mano River Union States. However, we call for a comprehensive security arrangement for the entire Mano River Union, instead of the current ad hoc strategy. We commend the Security Council's visit to the area last year and urge that the momentum be sustained, given the rather fluid political situation in the area.

We commend the Security Council for facilitating the peace process in Angola and welcome the establishment of an enhanced United Nations mission, as this will strengthen the urgently needed assistance in the peace-building, demobilization and quartering programme.

As regards the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria remains committed to the support of the Security Council to accomplish its current mandate in that country. We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation on the expansion of the mandate. We commend Council assistance in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation programme and urge troop-contributing countries to provide troops, personnel and equipment for the much-needed Air Field Services Unit. Nigeria will continue

to support the inter-Congolese dialogue, which we hope will lead to a durable peace and crystallize into formation of an all-inclusive Government.

The Security Council and the international community should support the South African-led peace process in Burundi. Meanwhile, we call on the parties to give peace a chance and observe a ceasefire to ensure effective international support in resolving the conflict.

On the subject of terrorism, Nigeria notes the Security Council's prompt response to the threat of terrorism after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States of America, with the adoption of resolution 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), which condemned the attacks and established the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC). The CTC has effectively galvanized an international coalition against terrorism, and this has proved the determination of the Council to live up to its Charter obligation for the maintenance of international peace and security. We remain committed to the global effort to combat international terrorism in all its ramifications.

In terms of working methods and the briefing of troop-contributing countries, Nigeria commends the regular briefings by the Security Council to non-members of the Council, as well as the briefing of Chairmen of Regional Groups. We note the regularity of these meetings and consultations with troop-contributing countries, especially the recently introduced system of briefing troop-contributing countries before the report of the Secretary-General on a mission is presented to the Council. We consider this practice a welcome development, as it enables the troop-contributing countries to express their views and offer ideas and suggestions for the overall improvement of the peacekeeping mandate. As a major troop-contributing country, Nigeria believes that the continuation of this process of consultation by the Security Council will eliminate friction and facilitate effective peacekeeping operations in the field.

We urge that the monthly wrap-up meetings of the Council remain as informal and interactive as possible. We support these meetings, as they provide Member States the opportunity to exchange views with the Council and enable them to benefit from lessons learned by all sides.

We note that the Security Council undertook a number of ad hoc missions to some conflict locations during the period under review. Nigeria appreciates and endorses this strategy. It is our belief that such missions will enhance the ability of the Council to assess situations on the ground and to anticipate, prevent as well as respond adequately to such situations. However, we would still urge that officials of subregional and regional organizations be invited to participate in such missions. Furthermore, the Council should endeavour to consult more with subregional and regional organizations before missions are undertaken. In this regard, Nigeria commends the Council's missions to West Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes. We urge that more such trips be undertaken, as the missions could be morale-boosting and also capable of encouraging good governance in those countries.

Nigeria reaffirms its support for the thematic debates in the Council on such issues as the prevention of armed conflict, HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping, gender and peacekeeping, and civilians in armed conflict. These debates have always provided opportunities for the Council and Member States to focus on related issues with a view to finding appropriate solutions. We hope that such efforts will be sustained.

We recall that, at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Millennium Declaration reaffirmed faith in the United Nations and its Charter as an indispensable foundation of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. It further resolved to intensify efforts towards achieving a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Nigeria therefore reiterates its support for the Declaration. We also believe that the Security Council needs to reflect the realities of the twenty-first century in order to better serve the interests of our Organization and its Charter, especially in the maintenance of international peace and security. Nigeria will therefore continue to support the increase in the membership of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, in line with the position of the African Union, which calls for at least two permanent seats for Africa in an enlarged Security Council.

In conclusion, Nigeria pledges its support for the efforts of the Security Council to make itself more responsive to global challenges and the yearnings of

Member States, and reiterates its determination to encourage the Council as it continues to improve its work methods and discharges its responsibility justly in the maintenance of international peace and security and in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Kerim (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): In light of current circumstances, our discussion on the report of the Security Council for the period June 2001 to July 2002 presents us with a unique task. As we review its report, we see that the Security Council is confronted with an issue, the situation in Iraq, which requires urgent and effective action that is in full compliance with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

As Secretary-General Annan rightly pointed out in his address to the General Assembly on 12 September:

> "I urge Iraq to comply with its obligations, for the sake of its own people and for the sake of world order. If Iraq's defiance continues, the Security Council must face its responsibilities." (*A/57/PV.2, p. 3*)

Eventually, making the Security Council relevant to the critical issues of the day is the most appropriate way to elevate its significance, stature and authority.

We look forward to the open Security Council debate on Iraq, which has been scheduled for later this week on the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement. No doubt, such a debate is necessary and useful. For the sake of strengthening the authority of the United Nations and acting in the spirit of multilateralism, the Republic of Macedonia would find it appropriate for the Security Council to adopt a resolution on Iraq that would send a strong and clear signal.

From our point of view, the Security Council has submitted a concise and sound report. In addition to this general assessment, allow me to make a few comments on some of the issues contained and elaborated on in the report.

We have noted with satisfaction improvements in the working methods of the Council, particularly an increasing degree of transparency. We also welcome the periodic wrap-up meetings of the Security Council, as well as the practice by some non-permanent members of providing regular briefings to non-member States on issues of crucial importance.

We commend the prompt and unanimous reaction of the Security Council concerning the events and aftermath of 11 September 2001. Fighting international terrorism must remain at the top of the agenda of the United Nations and especially of the Security Council. In this regard, we have a high appreciation for the activities of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom, and its essential contribution to the follow-up of resolution 1373 (2001).

We wish the Security Council would assume responsibilities and demonstrate leadership in other situations which have been outlined within the report — situations in which the world has been confronted by the nuclear threats of Member States involved in disputes that are apparently of a bilateral or regional character, but have potentially global consequences.

Finding a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is certainly the most painful and sensitive issue for the Security Council, as well as for the United Nations as a whole. Therefore, we believe that the Security Council should remain steadfast in its efforts to implement resolution 1397 (2002), as well as resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), including the peace initiative adopted at the Arab Summit in March 2002.

We fully concur with the assessments contained in the report on the Balkans. Within this context, we would like to stress the considerable contribution of the Security Council and the Secretary-General to making progress in the crisis management of that region. Together with the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations has managed to preserve peace and stability in the region. However, ethnic strife, organized crime and small arms collection remain very important tasks to be dealt with.

In dealing with issues related to peace in the region and the stability of my country, the Republic of Macedonia, the Security Council has acted in a considerate and cooperative manner. In this respect, we would like to mention the adoption of resolution 1371 (2001). This is an excellent example of a quick, measured and effective response of the Security Council to events and developments which were of concern not only to my country, but also to its immediate neighbours and the entire region.

Full engagement of the United Nations in Kosovo is of crucial importance in maintaining peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe. For this reason, acting in full compliance with Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1244 (1999) and 1345 (2001) is necessary. The benchmarks set up by the Special Representative of the General Assembly, implying standards before status, are in full accordance with this.

It is our deep conviction that the Security Council should support the International Criminal Court unconditionally, ensuring that essential principles of international law are not compromised. In that context, we fully support every effort made by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to ensure that all indicted war criminals are brought to justice without further delay.

With regard to conflict prevention and humanitarian issues, the Security Council has managed to make remarkable progress. In adopting its resolution 1366 (2001), on conflict prevention, the Security Council expressed its full commitment to the further implementation, throughout the entire United Nations system, of the recommendations of the Brahimi report (A/55/305) and the Secretary-General's report on conflict prevention (A/55/985). The work carried out by the Security Council and the Secretary-General in developing a policy framework for the protection of civilians in armed conflict deserves our full support. It represents a substantial contribution to the setting up of a coherent approach by the United Nations for the protection of civilian populations during armed conflict.

This discussion of the report of the Security Council also presents an opportunity to reflect on the United Nations as a whole. In making the United Nations a strong multilateral institution in the era of globalization, we must make sure that it enjoys credibility in all parts of the globe. The Security Council has to play a key role in that respect.

The strengthening of the United Nations system is one of the highest-ranking issues on our common agenda. It also implies reform of the Security Council. On the other hand, we must continue to be aware that the Council's decision-making authority is based on its capacity to take prompt and realistically founded decisions and actions. In our opinion, the most recent report of the Security Council contains certain elements which live up to such expectations. Our final goal, however, must still be to make the United Nations a more meaningful, more powerful and more effective Organization. In order to do so, every one of us must be aware that in this situation, no one can afford to behave like an ostrich with its head in the sand.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation welcomes this joint debate in the General Assembly to discuss the report of the Security Council (A/57/2) and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, since we believe that the two issues are closely linked. The holding of this joint debate is a good start to the rationalization of the work of the General Assembly and will be an encouragement to the Secretary-General, who is endeavouring to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization.

Certain procedures relating to the improvement of the Council's working methods are covered by both issues under discussion today. The Security Council has already begun to implement some of those procedures. In its annual report the Security Council provides evidence that consultations among troop-contributing countries has led to a great improvement in its work. Monthly appraisals of Security Council Presidents and open formal meetings have been very useful. This year's document does not contain the voluminous accounts that were included in the past. Rather, it contains brief accounts that provide adequate information on the deliberations of the Council. We look forward to further improvements in future reports, in accordance with part III of this year's report. The improvements that have been made were based on the serious work undertaken by the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group. We commend the Working Group; it must continue its efforts.

The Council's report refers only briefly to the practice of informal consultations, which have become the real mechanism by which decisions are taken in the Council. We know that such consultations precede the adoption of draft resolutions; the decisions have already been taken by the time the Council holds the public meetings in which the general membership is able to participate. Thus Member States are presented with a fait accompli, as decisions have already been taken in informal consultations.

We would like the Council to further expand its cooperation with the general membership and with regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. We hope that the Council will conduct a general review of its procedures. Improvements must be mandatory if they are to have a real impact on working methods.

Enhancing the relationship between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the United Nations is essential. It is unacceptable that the Council's relationship with the General Assembly should be confined to the issuance of an annual report. Cooperation between the Council and the General Assembly should be further expanded in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter. We also believe that the relations between the Council and the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice should be further expanded.

The Security Council should be impartial and objective and avoid selectivity and double standards when dealing with the various issues on its agenda. If transparency and democracy are the true foundations on which the legitimacy of national Governments rests, they should also apply to the United Nations, particularly the Security Council.

The practice of holding consultations behind closed doors among a very limited number of Council members should stop immediately. Failing to take action in this respect will result in one single country — or a very few countries — becoming the decision makers in the Council. This would cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Council's resolutions, which are adopted on behalf of the international community.

The Security Council will also perform its duties better when its composition reflects a more equitable geographic distribution. The Non-Aligned Movement has always stood firm on this issue, as we believe that expansion of the membership of the Council should be based on the principle of the sovereign equality of States. We believe that the non-permanent category of membership should be expanded. There should be no increase in the number of permanent members, as we do not want more members with special privileges.

We believe that expansion should be carried out in a non-selective manner and should take account of the limits imposed by the Organization's budget. We should also focus on increasing the resources of peacekeeping operations so as to weaken the power wielded by the strong over the weak. The general membership should be represented in an equitable and fair manner. Africa does not have an adequate number of seats in the Council much less a permanent seat, although the African Group has more members than any other regional group in the Organization. This is contrary to the proposal made at the Harare summit that Africa be granted two permanent seats in the Council in a manner commensurate with the size of its membership.

The question of the veto is one of the most controversial issues with respect to the reform of the Council. It is no exaggeration to say that it has further complicated the work of the Council since the establishment of the Organization. Since the first instance of its use, it has become clear that it runs counter to the principle of equal sovereignty among States and to other principles contained in the Charter. It does not promote democracy but undermines it. It accords a privilege to some, who then use it in the service of their own interests and against the national and international interests of others.

This poses a challenge to the authority of the majority of the Council. We believe that the use of the veto should be subject to approval by a two-thirds majority of the membership of the General Assembly. We believe also that Council reform will not be complete as long as the veto right is not eliminated. Only a few Members of the United Nations will have that right and will use it to impose their will on the rest of the world.

A few days ago, the Secretary-General stated that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without the reform of the Security Council. Two years ago, the Millennium Declaration called for the intensification of efforts to comprehensively reform the Security Council in all its aspects. This call should be translated into concrete action. It can become reality only through the cooperation of all.

We hope that the upcoming meetings of the Working Group on Council reform will give priority to the key objectives of the Charter of the United Nations in order further to democratize the Council and its work.

Mr. Atta (Egypt) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I should like at the outset to extend my heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia in the wake of the tragic events that took place late last week.

We would all agree that the Security Council has devoted most of its meetings and consultations to Africa and its various political issues. We would also agree that the Council has amply demonstrated that it is capable of bearing the heavy responsibility entrusted to it by the Member States for the maintenance of peace and security in the African continent. This has been made clear in the efforts it has deployed in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, in Ethiopia and Eritrea and in other hotbeds of tension in the continent.

This gives us grounds for optimism and hope as to the Council's determination to fulfil the tremendous responsibility entrusted to it of settling armed conflicts in Africa and to use its political weight to support efforts for peace in Africa.

At the same time, proceeding from our collective will to enhance the role of the Council in Africa and to promote a partnership between the Council, the continent and its regional and subregional organizations, we would like to stress three basic pillars that should underline the Council's approach to African issues.

First, an effort should be made to establish an institutionalized and regulated relationship between the Security Council and African organizations in the field of conflict settlement and the maintenance of peace and security in the continent. This relationship would keep the Council abreast of the positions taken by the African continent and take account of the limited military, logistical and financial resources of the continent.

Secondly, the Security Council's responsibilities should be extended to the other armed conflicts that are tearing the African continent asunder, not only those that are of special interest to its influential members. It should deal with all conflicts in the continent in an equitable manner that does not discriminate between the various issues. That could be done by devoting increased attention to the issues of Somalia, the Central African Republic, Burundi, Liberia and others that have not been given the same attention by the Council or the international community.

Thirdly, the Security Council's response to conflicts in Africa should be commensurate with the dimension and complexity of those conflicts. That will require political will on the part of the Council that is equal to that shown in the case of Timor-Leste, Kosovo and other areas — areas that are not in Africa. Peacekeeping missions in the continent could also be given further attention and resources.

For more than a decade now, the General Assembly's Working Group on reform and expansion of the membership of the Council has been doing very important work. We are committed to the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the African Union, and we have actively participated in both their working groups on this issue. We would like in this regard to stress the elements included in the statement made by the representative of Ethiopia with respect to the African position on the expansion of the membership of the Council.

All of these working groups have deployed tireless efforts to reform the Council in the area of the permanent and non-permanent categories and with regard to the veto right and other working methods of the Council. However, any delay in the consideration of these issues should not be interpreted as acceptance by the General Assembly of the present form or working methods of the Council. We believe, therefore, that a number of steps should be taken in order to give the expansion of the Council the high priority it deserves.

Closed meetings of the Council have become the rule, though they were intended to be the exception. That affects the openness of the Council, since decisions are taken during the closed consultations, while open meetings are held to enable the general membership — whose influence on decision-making is not clear — to express their views. Therefore, we request greater transparency in the methods of work of the Council in its private meetings and in its closed consultations.

Secondly, the Security Council must take into account the views of non-member States of the Council that have a direct or indirect connection to a given issue, in particular when it comes to the imposition of measures against another State, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter. That Article has been ignored for too long. It is applicable and should be resorted to, and we believe that the time has come to do so.

Thirdly, the Security Council should further seek out the specific opinions of the general membership when discussing any important issue. That would add to the practicality, credibility and applicability of any decision taken by the Council.

Fourthly, the Council should address all threats to international peace and security on an equal footing. Certain international issues should enjoy greater attention from the Council, which we have seen hasten to deal with one particular question while ignoring others that may pose a greater threat to international peace and security.

Fifthly, all Security Council resolutions should be implemented with equal rigour. Some are implemented immediately and to the letter, while others seem to be ignored by the Council or by any State that may be involved in their implementation. We in the Middle East have many examples to invoke in this regard.

Sixthly, with respect to the Council's working methods and the follow-up to its recommendations, the Council took a commendable step in establishing a Panel of Experts last July to submit an independent report on the violations of the arms embargo against Somalia. A similar step should be taken with regard to the grave violations of international humanitarian law committed in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The Open-ended Working Group has held only six meetings over the course of the entire year. This, we believe, will not lead to the further progress that we all expect on the Council.

Mr. Yuchengco (Philippines): Through you, Sir, allow me to thank the Permanent Representative of Cameroon and President of the Security Council for this month, Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou, for introducing this year's report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

The Philippines also wishes to extend its deepest condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia over the despicable terrorist attack this past weekend, which took the lives of so many. Our condolences go, too, to the other Governments and families that also lost loved ones in the attack.

The General Assembly, which is the only United Nations organ that receives reports from the other principal organs, including that of the Security Council, must effectively seize this opportunity each session to comment on and assess the Security Council's work and decisions during the period covered by its annual report.

As a whole, we find the present annual report more concise and more organized than previous ones. We congratulate the Council on the changes made to the report's format and we welcome the new format, which provides more substantive details and information. We further welcome the inclusion of an analytical portion on the activities of the Council in the introduction segment of the report. Perhaps that section could be expanded in future reports.

We also note the deletion of the descriptive list of all decisions, resolutions and presidential statements for the one-year period preceding the period covered by the current report, and we are pleased that the report no longer includes the verbatim account of the discussions on each subject dealt with by the Council during the period under consideration.

These changes, at the very least, make it easier for the general membership to gain a clearer appreciation of the activities and decisions of the Council. Nevertheless, it might also be useful for the Council to consider submitting, from time to time each year, special reports, as referred to in Article 15 of the Charter, so as to keep the General Assembly abreast of the Council's work. For example, the period of the present report goes up to 31 July 2002. A supplemental special report covering the period from, say, 1 August to 1 October would also have been useful.

Regarding the observation of delegations in previous debates on this item that the Council's report is not analytical, but a mere compendium of documents and activities undertaken by the Council, my delegation shares the view that an analytical report would be virtually impossible, given the highly politicized and controversial nature of many issues considered by the Security Council. As my delegation has stated before, we believe that the analysis and assessment of the issues in the report are the responsibility of the States members of the General Assembly. It is up to us to assess what is contained in the report.

We are pleased to note from the report that the year under review was marked by significant events, highlighted by, among other things, the Council's action on terrorism, the successful completion of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), the launching of the Bonn process and its on-track implementation in Afghanistan, and the peace process and successful elections in Sierra Leone. While there are an abundant number of issues covered by the report, in view of the limited time, allow me to comment on just some.

We commend the efforts of the Council in fighting terrorism. In particular, we support the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which we note has made considerable progress over the past year. The Philippines is committed to supporting the work of the Committee, particularly its programme on technical assistance. We also believe that to enhance more effective implementation by States of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), the provision of technical assistance would be more than helpful.

We recognize the significant role of the Council in the establishment of UNMISET, which led to the full independence of East Timor. As we celebrate the birth of that new nation, we join other nations in welcoming Timor-Leste as the newest Member of the United Nations.

The Security Council has a crucial role to play in finding an effective solution to the Middle East conflict, and we believe it must continue to do so. My delegation views the recently adopted declaration of the Quartet, specifying its three-phase solution to realize the vision of two States living side by side in secure borders, as a positive development. We would, however, emphasize that the international community cannot impose peace. The success of the Quartet formula rests on the parties concerned. We reiterate that there is no military solution to the Middle East conflict. The way forward is through political negotiations.

The Security Council's consideration of the issue of small arms is important and should complement the efforts of the General Assembly, as well as national and regional activities.

On the working methods of the Council, we believe that a number of improvements have been made over the past few years in order to increase transparency and greater participation by non-members. Nevertheless, the Council's procedures and the recent positive innovations in its working methods remain provisional and ad hoc in nature. The Council might wish to heed the Secretary-General's suggestion in his agenda for further change (A/57/387) that the Council consider codifying its recent changes. One way to do that would be to adopt definitively its provisional rules of procedures and annex its recent innovations to the rules. We also support more dialogue between the representatives of the Council and the General Assembly's Open-ended Working Group on the Council's working methods and related issues. Such meetings have proven to be useful and a good way for the Council and General Assembly to have an interactive exchange on a broad range of issues.

We find the Council's thematic debates very useful, and they should be continued. Nevertheless, we believe they should also aim at some action-oriented objective over a medium-term period. The Council's thematic debates should also be synchronized with debates on the same issues in the General Assembly, in order to link the decisions and appropriate policy actions taken by the Council and the Assembly on these issues. One such issue that comes to mind is the prevention of armed conflict. Linking outcomes would also be a step towards more interaction between the Council and the Assembly.

In the coming years, my delegation looks forward to a more substantive consideration by the Assembly of the report of the Council, not necessarily of the whole report but at least of certain issues addressed in it. In that regard, it is suggested that the President identify specific issues for more intensive discussion. That should be done while taking into account Article 12 and in a more informal format, such as informal consultations or round tables. The discussions should aim at reaching a specific outcome such as a decision, a chairman's summary or simply an aide-memoire of the discussion. This approach would, in our view, be in line with the intent of earlier resolutions on the revitalization of the General Assembly. The issues selected could be country-specific or could be among the thematic matters considered by the Council.

Regarding the agenda item on the reform of the Security Council, the Philippines is committed to promoting agreement on measures aimed at achieving a more open and transparent decision-making process in the Security Council, as well as on finding an acceptable compromise on the expansion in the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Council.

As we enter the tenth year of our exercise on the reform of the Security Council, we remain deadlocked on the issue of new permanent members. The Open-ended Working Group has had some influence in initiating positive reforms in the working methods of the Council, including more open meetings, regular briefings and improved arrangements for consultations with troop-contributing countries. We therefore believe

that this session of the work of the Group should focus on the main outstanding issues of expansion, while preserving the tentative agreements reached on cluster II issues relating to the Council's working methods.

Finally, we are prepared to support all efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive package agreement consisting of measures relating to the expansion of the Council's membership and to enhancing the transparency of the Council's working methods.

Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to convey my delegation's deep condolences to the bereaved families of those killed in the bomb attack in Indonesia last weekend. We also wish a speedy recovery to those injured as a result of that attack. We condemn acts of terrorism targeting innocent civilians and reaffirm our commitment to join the rest of international community in fighting such terrorist acts.

As we have noted, this year's report of the Security Council (A/57/2) contains many improvements over previous reports. It is more cost-effective thanks to the reduction in the size of the report. With the introduction of an analytical overview, it also gives a clearer picture of the Council's work. Such progress in the format of the report is a welcome response to long-standing requests from the wider membership of the United Nations. We believe that these efforts on the part of the Security Council to make its report a more in-depth account of its work should be continued and further strengthened.

Let me now briefly review the Council's work over the past year. The period under consideration, from June 2001 to July 2002, was indeed a unique and busy time. Among other things, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, for whose gravity no precedent exists, changed our perception of the world. As the international community swiftly realized the imperative need to stand together in the face of such global threats, the Security Council rose to the occasion by reinforcing the resolve of the international community and by enhancing its readiness to take united action. The adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the subsequent establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee clearly demonstrated how the international community, under the guidance of the Security Council, can act in partnership and solidarity in the fight against a common security threat.

With regard to regional matters, the cases of Afghanistan and East Timor stand out as successful missions. With well-planned engagement and assistance, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions, both countries have made remarkable progress towards stability and democracy. The Republic of Korea has been actively engaged in the efforts of the international community in this regard, including by providing humanitarian assistance and logistical and other support.

Mr. Santa Clara Gomes (Portugal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In the Middle East, there seems to be no respite in violence and strife. The loss of civilian lives and the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the region are of profound concern. There have been both achievements and setbacks in the Council's work to address these challenges. However, what is important is that the Security Council has laid down crucial groundwork for peace in the Middle East by setting out in its resolution 1397 (2001) a vision of two States living side by side within secure and recognized borders. We truly hope that the efforts of the international community, particularly those of the "Quartet", to bring lasting peace to the region will succeed in achieving a positive outcome within the framework of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

With regard to Africa, it has been encouraging to note the cessation of some civil and inter-State conflicts. Though peace in many parts of the continent still remains fragile, such developments as the holding of elections in Sierra Leone and peace agreements relating to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola certainly give us cause for optimism and hope. The role of the Security Council, including its mandate of peacekeeping and peace-building missions, is indispensable to these endeavours. Noteworthy, too, is the Council's renewed attention to the region with the establishment of the Ad hoc Working Group on Africa during the year.

My delegation also values the work of the Security Council in Europe and other parts of the world, as well as its continued engagement with the issues of protecting civilians, especially women and children in armed conflicts.

Let me now turn to the working methods of the Security Council. My delegation's basic approach to this matter, perhaps shared by many other delegations,

is that the views and observations of the wider membership of the United Nations should be duly reflected in the work of the Security Council. In this ever-globalizing world, few international issues of peace and security remain isolated in scope and seriousness. As the issue of counter-terrorism most compellingly shows, the matters before the Council have far-reaching implications and consequences for nearly all corners of the world. Transparency in the work of the Council and the substantial contributions by its non-members are two sides of the same coin, since, without comprehensive knowledge of the Council's work, the non-member States can hardly make meaningful contributions. Stronger and wider participation by non-members in the Council discussions would also further enhance the authority of the Council in implementing its resolutions.

In this regard, the increasing frequency of public meetings and briefings in the Security Council is a welcome development. The way that the Counter-Terrorism Committee has worked, offering regular briefings by its chairman, is an example to be emulated. However, the challenge ahead lies in the fact that confidentiality still serves as the norm rather than the exception in the work of the Council and that there exists great inconsistency in the openness and transparency, from month to month and from committee to committee.

My delegation believes that further efforts should be made to find ways and means to enhance openness, transparency and efficiency in the working methods of the Security Council. We would like to suggest that the public meetings of the Council, particularly those on thematic issues, be conducted in a more focused manner, by narrowing the scope of subject under discussion, thereby enabling the Council's discussions to be more action-oriented.

Other measures might include the institutionalization of post-meeting briefings and timely dissemination of the results of meetings, including those of the sanctions committees. With regard to post-meeting briefings, we believe that the option of appointing a spokesperson, whose major role would be to provide up-to-date briefings to non-members on the results of each meeting, merits serious consideration.

Let me now turn to the question of the reform of the Security Council. First of all, while the slow pace of discussions and lack of tangible progress can be frustrating, we should not attribute this stalemate to ineffectiveness on the part of the Working Group; rather, it is a reflection of the tremendous significance and politically sensitive nature of this issue. My delegation believes that the Working Group, the sole body mandated by the General Assembly to discuss Security Council reforms, still remains the best forum for addressing the issue.

Secondly, the reform of the Security Council, both in its shape and in its decision-making process, should be guided by democratic principles and should reflect our current reality. The two major questions — the enlargement of the Council and the decision-making procedures — are inextricably linked and are therefore best considered in a single context.

Thirdly, as we have witnessed, a growing number of States have been playing an increasingly active role in the work of the United Nations and have become indispensable to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. In spite of these developments, only a handful of Member States are given the opportunity to fully participate in the work of the Security Council. This discrepancy lies at the heart of our efforts to reform the Security Council. In light of this situation, a greater effort must be made to find ways to provide as many countries as possible with the opportunity to serve on the Council on a more frequent basis.

I would like to reiterate my Government's view that an increase in the number of non-permanent seats alone is a viable option under the circumstances. This would allow more members to be elected for regular terms, thereby making the Council more representative and accountable.

Finally, cooperation among the whole of the United Nations membership will be needed to surmount the daunting challenges ahead of us. In this context, it is critical that the reform of the Security Council be carried out in a way that unites Member States.

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to remind Members that the General Committee will meet tomorrow morning, Tuesday, 15 October, at 9.30 in Conference Room 4. The agenda for the meeting can be found in today's Journal.

I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to express my condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the family members of all the victims of the terrible terrorist attack, a scourge of the twenty-first century.

Secondly, I would like to thank all the Members of the United Nations for supporting Spain's candidacy to one of the non-permanent member seats of the Security Council for the coming biennium. I also want to thank the representative of Cameroon, the current President of the Security Council, for presenting this report.

The Foreign Minister of Spain, in her speech in the General Assembly in September, said that our country would, during its tenure, work in favour of transparency and greater openness of the Council. It is undeniable that progress has been made in improving the working methods of the Council in recent times; for example, the increase in the number of public meetings, which are open to participation to all non-members who wish to attend, and the innovative practice introduced by some members of the Council to hold the so-called wrap-up meetings at the end of their presidency. Another interesting example is that of the meetings in the last two years of the Working Group on Security Council Reform with representatives of the Council members in order to discuss aspects of working methods.

Also with respect to achievements, we should underline the excellent reform to the format and content of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, now under consideration. Numerous delegations, including mine, have spoken in favour of a less voluminous report that is easier for the user, more analytical and more transparent. The report — we are delighted to say — has improved considerably and better corresponds to the wishes expressed by many Member States. We wish to thank the members of the Council for the work carried out, with a special mention for Ambassador Mahbubani.

Despite the achievements, the reality is that the Council continues to favour closed meetings — the consultations — and the semi-closed meetings, the so-called private meetings. My delegation has traditionally argued that the consultations should be reduced to the minimum number necessary and that an effort should be made to clarify the modalities and criteria for the participation of non-member States in the private meetings.

The question of working methods is not a futile discussion. We are convinced that one of the ways to make the Security Council more effective lies in carrying improvements in this area further.

As has been noted on various occasions, including at the Millennium Summit, the great majority of Members of the Organization desire a reform of the Security Council that will make it a more efficient and more participative organ. A reform of that kind can be carried out only if there is consensus on the elements such a reform consists of. The Millennium Declaration echoes this need when it calls on all to carry out a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. The clarity of the Declaration is obvious and completely excludes any partial focus. Unfortunately, we are still far from reaching consensus on the various aspects of reform, and, therefore, discussions in the Working Group of the General Assembly should continue.

One of the key aspects of reform is the decision-making process in the Council, including the veto. The question of the veto is an essential aspect of Council reform. It is of prime importance. The great majority of States unhesitatingly wish that this unparalleled instrument of power be eliminated or — if nothing else — reduced in scope.

However, we know that our ambition is somewhat illusory. Those possessing the veto power are unlikely to surrender it, even partially. We also know that the status of permanent member is inexorably linked to the veto power. Bearing that in mind, an obvious question must once more be asked: do we realize — in 2002, 57 years after the last war — what it would mean to increase the number of permanent members, based on more than debatable criteria, in addition to granting them the all-powerful prerogative of being able to veto any resolution of the Council? Can we, today, collectively and bitterly lament that the United Nations has been prevented from acting because the vote of a single member has paralyzed it, and then tomorrow grant that same paralyzing power to another handful of chosen States?

The veto is a crucial element of reform, in particular as it relates to an increase in the membership. When, in the twenty-first century, there is

a demand among Members to abolish an existing power, it is, to say the least, strange that we should grant that power to yet another group of countries. Aside from acting paradoxically, we would be creating a new class of privileged States, poorly serving the United Nations.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I cannot begin today without expressing to the Indonesian authorities our profound shock and grief at what happened in Bali. We condemn the bombing in the strongest terms. Our thoughts and prayers are with those families who have lost their loved ones.

We owe sincere thanks to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council (A/57/2).

This year's report, as has been stated, marks a notable improvement in trying to be more than just a reference document. We view the editorial changes favourably. We would suggest further rationalization of the contents through the elimination of all sections containing records of meetings and catalogues of documents. If deemed necessary, a separate volume, which would not duplicate the repertoire, could be considered.

The objective of this debate is to exchange information, to share views and to deliberate on policy orientation on international peace and security. In that context, we find the introduction to the report of particular interest. It is a laudable initiative. Nevertheless, it falls short of what the general membership has long been asking for. The introduction does not go beyond what we read in individual presidential assessment reports.

While on the Council, Bangladesh had wished for a report that would serve the purpose of a dialogue between the Council and the Assembly. The idea we pursued was to have a substantive report that would present an analysis of issues before the Council, the difficulties confronted in resolving ongoing conflicts, the challenges of prevention and the tasks of peace-building.

To that end, we suggested that the report include, apart from information and analysis, specific recommendations on the implementation of its resolutions and decisions. The Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It cannot discharge that responsibility alone. Given the complexity of today's conflicts and other threats to international peace and security, the Council's efforts require the support of the Assembly and other organs, funds, programmes and agencies. The Bretton Woods institutions, regional and subregional organizations, the non-governmental organizations and the private sector are also important players and stakeholders. There is need, and certainly the scope, to further strengthen cooperation and coordination with those stakeholders.

The decisions of the Security Council affect Member States. We would have liked the Council to tell us, for instance, about non-compliance with its resolutions, the violation of sanctions and the impact of sanctions on third countries.

For the next session, we would expect the President of the Security Council to present a substantive report — just like the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization — highlighting the issues the Council addressed over the reporting year, presenting the challenges ahead and calling for the specific support required for implementation of its resolutions and decisions. The report should cover the period from October to September, given that the Security Council report is considered in mid-October.

Let me share some of our specific ideas and concerns with regard to the Council's functioning. First, with respect to the Council's relationship with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council: as we have suggested on other occasions, the General Assembly and the Security Council could hold quarterly meetings for review of the implementation of Council decisions. The areas of cooperation and coordination might be identified and worked out by their respective offices in coordination with the Secretariat. The General Assembly President might have with him five members of his Bureau representing the five electoral groups. The Security Council President likewise might have five members representing five electoral groups. A similar institutional arrangement might be envisaged for coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

Secondly, as regards openness and participation, Council meetings should be held in public or private formats, depending on the need for confidentiality. The use of informal consultations should be restricted to exceptionally sensitive cases. When the agenda item so

requires, the Council should meet with the active participation of non-members and other stakeholders, the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, in their deliberations. Further ways and means should be explored to involve non-governmental organizations in the Council's work. We have supported increased recourse to orientation debates for the purpose. The Council might hold more Arria-formula meetings to exchange views with civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations and think tanks.

Thirdly, on the Council's relationship with troop-contributing countries, we note with regret the continuation of the practice of pro forma meetings. Bangladesh proposed the holding of periodic meetings between the Council and the troop-contributing countries, instead of the last-minute pro forma meetings called generally prior to renewal of peacekeeping mandates. Such meetings convened under the terms of Council resolutions 1327 (2000) and 1353 (2001) would be important for sustained exchange, review of implementation of the mandate of missions and discussion of any difficulties faced by the missions. These periodic meetings would allow for better reflection of the concerns and positions of troop-contributing countries in Council decisions.

Fourthly, we recognize the extremely valuable contribution made by groups of friends in drafting Council resolutions. In the current practice, Council members not represented on any of these groups are virtually excluded from the decision-making process. There should be an official list, with the composition of the various groups of friends, however informal they may be. The list of the groups of friends should be posted on the United Nations web site.

Fifthly, on relating procedural improvements to substantive action, besides the specific suggestions, we have stressed the need to relate procedural reforms to those of substance. First, the Council should function in such a way as not to invite the criticism of "doing too little, too late" as has, at times, been the case. The Council should be proactive rather then reactive, as has sadly been the case in recent times. The Council should address issues more on the basis of developments rather than as calendar events determined by the submission of reports or expiry of mandates.

We note with satisfaction a positive evolution in the Council's perception of peace and security. The challenge of maintaining international peace and security is increasingly recognized as a continuing process requiring a comprehensive approach and involving all stakeholders.

Finally, on the issue of expansion, Bangladesh shares the position taken by the Non-Aligned Movement. We hold the view that both reform and expansion of the Security Council should be considered as integral parts of a common package. We support an increase in the membership of the Security Council by not less than 11, based on the principles of equitable geographical distribution and sovereign equality of States.

The objective of reform remains to enhance transparency, accountability and democratization in the decision-making process of the Security Council. We are not in favour of any partial or selective expansion or enlargement of the membership to the detriment of developing countries.

We also believe that the Council should function more as a rule-based organ in accordance with Charter provisions. The principle and the objective of collective security should be upheld in its action in every case.

All these principles have been stated time and again. But the process remains stalled in the Working Group. The United Nations has accomplished significant reforms in past years. After his track 1 and track 2 reforms, the Secretary-General has launched a further programme of revitalization and rationalization of the Organization. The process will remain incomplete without reform of the Security Council. It is time we thought of ways and means to engage in serious negotiations on core issues and lead the reform process to a conclusion.

Bangladesh attaches the greatest importance to the peace and security mission of the Organization and the role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. We have made every effort to contribute to that mission. We have demonstrated our commitment by extending the fullest cooperation to the Council, by contributing to positive, proactive and constructive decision-making directly as a member in 2000 and 2001, and by contributing troops and other personnel to United Nations peace operations, irrespective of risks and uncertainties.

The overarching goal of reform and expansion of the Security Council for us is to make the Council more balanced, representative and effective. There have been major breaches of the peace across the world in the past two decades. The Security Council has not always been effective. It has remained stymied. It has been accused of employing double standards. There have been wars between, but mostly within, States. The humanitarian consequences in each case, though differing in extent and magnitude, have been appalling. The impact on the economies of the affected countries, almost all of them developing nations, has been disastrous. The cost of these wars for third countries and, in general, for the international community has also been enormous.

All these conflicts have been senseless. All these expenditures could, and should, have been avoided. It should be our common endeavour to pursue the Charter's objective of employing "international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples".

But when a sizeable portion of global resources is spent on armed conflicts, this aim remains seriously jeopardized. If the Security Council fails to address this phenomenon, the vision of the founding fathers of this Organization will remain unrealized.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Firstly, I wish to express condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia for the savage terrorist attack that took place in Bali on 2 October, which we condemn most vigorously.

This year we have decided to have a joint debate of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly and the question of reform of the Security Council. It is the right thing to do, because both subjects have a common denominator that, I think, is an objective all of us here share — namely, to have a more transparent Security Council in its working methods, more representative in its composition, more democratic in its decision-making process and more accountable to the rest of the United Nations membership for its actions.

Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, introduced the Council's report, contained in document A/57/2. Here we want to emphasize an important positive point — last year's debate was not in vain; the Council adopted a receptive and positive attitude. It took into account the Assembly's criticism concerning the format and substance of the report and produced a shorter and more useful one. In this respect, we want to praise the role played by the non-permanent members, and in particular, Singapore and its Permanent Representative, my friend, the indefatigable and intelligent Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani. It is also worth noting that, for the first time, the report contains an introduction with an analytical summary. In this respect, we appreciate the contribution made by the United Kingdom.

There is no doubt that the report can and should be improved. For the most part, it continues to be a formal description of events that does little justice to the substantive work carried out by the Council. Nevertheless, we believe that a first step has been taken in the right direction. That step should be encouraged.

With regard to transparency, we are grateful to the Secretariat for the preparation of document S/2002/603, which illustrates the positive development in the working methods of the Council during the past few years. In this connection, we support the suggestion made by the Secretary-General in his report on the strengthening of the United Nations (A/57/387) concerning codification of those practices. Contrary to the views expressed by some permanent members during the public meeting of 26 September, we do not believe that such codification would work against pragmatism and dynamism in the Council's work. On the contrary, it would improve the legal soundness of procedures and contribute to diminishing the margin for discretion, especially that of the permanent members. Those members constitute the sole repository of the Council's institutional memory and, on more than one occasion, have invoked precedents that the non-permanent members are at a loss to recall. We believe that, after 57 years, it is time for the Council's rules of procedure to cease being provisional.

There is no doubt that there has been progress. Today we have a Council that is a little more transparent than it was 10 years ago. Nevertheless, there is still a long way to go. As the report itself points out, most of the Council's substantive work takes place in informal consultations. Public meetings therefore serve as a rubber stamp for what is negotiated and agreed upon behind closed doors. Having said that, we are aware of the fact that informal consultations are a reality in the work of the Council. Faced with that reality, we must act, first to reduce the number of

informal consultations and, secondly, to allow access to consultations, under specific circumstances, to a State party to a conflict that is not a member of the Council. We believe that Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter provide an adequate legal basis for doing so. The participation of interested States should not hinder the Council's decision-making process. On the contrary, it would increase the transparency and political legitimacy of the decisions adopted by the Council.

Also with regard to the issue of informal consultations, we would like to recall the Argentine proposal put forth in the note by the President of the Council (S/2000/155), which was issued on 28 February 2000. That proposal would invite newly elected members to participate in the Council's informal consultations during the month immediately preceding their term of membership. That proposal would guarantee greater transparency and make it possible for new members to acquaint themselves with the Council's practices in informal consultations.

The last few weeks have done little to contribute to transparency in the Council. We have all witnessed how discussions about issues crucial to international peace and security that affect basic principles of international law, and that may seriously affect the very existence of the United Nations, take place exclusively among the permanent members of the Council. It seems that the elected members of the Council and the rest of us only have the right to be informed through the newspapers. We have recently read that proposals have been made to include in the text of a resolution an unacceptable and discriminatory distinction between the powers of permanent and elected members, something that runs counter to the letter and the spirit of the Charter.

We would not like to conclude this part of our statement on the working methods of the Council on a negative note. We would therefore like to point to two positive developments. First, we are pleased with the follow-up received by the initiative launched by the delegations of Argentina and New Zealand in 1994 to institutionalize the meetings with the troop-contributing countries. Resolution 1353 (2001) has paved the way for a more substantive dialogue.

In the context of the Council's work in the fight against terrorism, we would like to highlight the transparency and efficiency of the work done by Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 1373 (2001), and by Ambassador Valdivieso of Colombia in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 1267 (1999).

After nine years of deliberations, we have still not achieved the progress desired with regard to the veto and to increasing the membership of the Council. Like the overwhelming majority of Member States, Argentina is opposed to the veto. The veto is an institution that runs contrary to the principle of sovereign equality among States. We are nevertheless realistic enough to know that the elimination of the veto will not be accepted in the medium term. That is why we propose a functional and reasonable limitation of the veto that includes restricting its use to situations under Chapter VII of the Charter. In our opinion, such limitations should be established through amendments to the Charter. A political commitment would not provide sufficient legal guarantees. Even a unilateral legal declaration to restrict the use of the veto would fail to prevail over the provisions of Article 103 of the Charter.

We have said on numerous occasions that the reform of the Security Council is a "package deal". We therefore cannot artificially separate proposals by, for example, putting off the issue of the veto and discussing only the matter of expansion, under the pretext that the veto has not been used much since the end of the cold war and that it does not represent a reform priority at the moment. Our recent experience in the Council does not support that conclusion. On the contrary, it shows that the veto or the threat of veto is a relevant political tool. That is the reason for the reluctance to change on the part of permanent members. There is no doubt that issues of expansion and of the power of the veto are closely linked, given that it is clear that it is not possible to take a decision on the enlargement of a body of such political importance as the Council without a previous agreement on the decision-making process of that body. That is why the real reason for the delay in the reform of the Council is clear: it lies within an obstructionist minority that opposes any limitation of the veto, and not in the vast majority of States that want a more democratic and representative Council.

We believe that we should not perpetuate the inequalities of the past by establishing new permanent seats following the model of 1945, namely, members that are not accountable to the rest of the membership

and that enjoy the privilege of the veto. Doing so would further augment existing inequalities. It would also be tantamount to ignoring the march of history and would imperil the right of every Member State to elect and be elected to participate in the system of collective security. Quite frankly, in nine years of discussion we have not heard any proposals to increase the number of permanent members that have not contradicted the democratic principles espoused by their sponsors in their own legal systems.

I would like to repeat once again that Argentina only supports increasing the number of non-permanent members. We believe such members should be elected in accordance with the criteria set out in Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter, namely, on the basis of their contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and the principle of equitable geographic distribution. We believe that those criteria continue to be in effect. Finally, we also think that it is up to regional groups to decide the allocation of the new non-permanent seats created as a consequence of the reform of the Council.

I would not want to end my statement without conveying our congratulations to the newly elected members of the Council: Angola, Chile, Germany, Spain and Pakistan.

Mr. McIvor (New Zealand): May I add my delegation's condolences to the families of the victims of last weekend's appalling terrorist attacks in Bali, which has left many killed and many more injured. This a very tragic reminder of the global nature of the terrorist threat and the need equally of global responses, something indeed that has been on the forefront of the Security Council's action in the past year.

We welcome the decision to combine the debate on the annual report of the Security Council with that on issues relating to its membership and working methods. We hope that this will mean a more efficient use of this Assembly's time. More important, we see this as a logical combination, since the two items are inextricably linked. In my delegation's view the performance and credibility of the Council depend much on how it is constituted and how it conducts its business. Consideration of the report should play a key role in our collective efforts to enhance the Council's transparency and effectiveness and hold it accountable.

My delegation joins others in welcoming the efforts that have been made this year to produce a more concise, analytical and user-friendly annual report of the Security Council. In this the Council has begun to respond to calls made over the last few years for improvements in this report. We have been seeking a report that is substantive rather than formal, analytic rather than descriptive. In this regard, the commentary provided in the eight-page introduction to this year's annual report represents a move in the right direction.

It has been a remarkable year for the Council, including the response to terrorist attacks of September last year, the substantially increased attention to the Middle East, and the Council's key role in international action on Afghanistan. The report's introduction conveys a sense of the Council's response to new and continuing challenges. We look forward to next year's report building on this by providing a fuller analysis of how the Council has dealt with issues coming before it — what worked well, what didn't work so well, and why. The report is the Council's opportunity to address its universal constituency on vital issues of international peace and security.

On transparency and working methods, we welcome the President's note of May 2002 on procedural developments. Indeed we would have thought that the President's note contains information and comment that could usefully be incorporated in the annual report itself — the current section on these issues in the introduction is very brief. We fully support the suggestion that recent improvements in working methods might be codified in some way.

In the past year there have been encouraging developments to further enhance Member State consultation with the Council, including a useful joint meeting of the Open-ended Working Group and the Council to discuss workings methods. There have been more open-ended meetings and wrap-up sessions. Presidency web sites have been very helpful, particularly when kept up to date. The Singapore presidency in particular worked hard at improving transparency and the effectiveness of non-member participation.

The consultation process between the Council and troop-contributing countries is settling in well. Again we appreciate the Council's responsiveness to concerns expressed last year on this issue, including by my delegation. We welcome the arrangements for

consultation between the Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping and Troop-Contributing Countries, set out in the Council's President's note of 14 January. This provides an additional mechanism to that contained in Council resolution 1353 (2001). We found the joint meeting with East Timor troop-contributing countries helpful, though we would have welcomed more interaction with Council members attending the session.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, opportunities for consultation between members and non-members remain predominantly formal, involving set pieces with limited interaction. At times it is entirely appropriate that Member States set out national positions during these sessions. However, on other occasions the discussions could be more free-flowing. We accept that the onus to improve the quality of these debates rests with non-members as well as members. We also recognize that the Council's time is limited and that it is faced with a growing number of increasingly complex issues. Selective use of additional committees or working groups might help in this regard and at the same time encourage greater interaction between members and interested non-members. We wonder also whether the physical layout and grandeur of the Council Chamber might not also inhibit more useful interaction.

Transparency counts most when it relates to matters of substance. Many important issues continue to take place behind close doors. Smaller missions in particular have difficulty keeping in touch with key developments when this involves deploying limited resources outside the Council Chamber. There is only so much coffee one can drink in a day. In this regard, advance notice of the timing of briefings is helpful.

The essential dilemma remains. When non-members are not permitted to attend Council meetings, their ability to make a contribution to its deliberations depends on having some knowledge of those discussions — and then the opportunity to make an input before the Council comes to a decision. In this regard we welcome the readiness of some non-permanent members to seek our views on regional issues coming before the Council.

We recognize that on occasion draft texts need to be considered behind closed doors in the interest of achieving consensus. But we need to remind ourselves that transparency and participation are the keys to credibility and effectiveness. The rules of procedure say that the Council shall meet in public unless it decides otherwise; public discussion should be the rule and not the exception. In 2001, there were 183 informal consultations compared with 159 public meetings. With respect to private meetings, they can be a useful tool for the involvement of non-Council members, but we need clear and uniform rules for participation.

Finally, there is little more that can be said about recent further attempts to achieve a more representative Council. During the course of the year the Working Group was unable to make any progress on the matter. This comes at a time when the Security Council has been wrestling with issues that, perhaps more than ever, are of vital interest to the membership as a whole. In my delegation's view the credibility of the multilateral system and that of the Council are inextricably linked. The Council's standing ultimately will depend not on how it conducts its business but on how it is constituted. Its credibility, acceptability and effectiveness will require a change in membership to reflect the reality of the modern world. It will require an end to the right of a single country to hold the power of veto over the entire membership. My delegation considers also that the time is coming when we will need to re-think anachronistic regional groupings which hinder rather than help the search for consensus that is an essential feature of this unique organization.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): Looking back on the activities of the Security Council during the past year, since the terrorist attacks on 11 September, we think that in general the Council has functioned well in carrying out its tasks in the maintenance of international peace and security. The best example is its in counter-terrorism, where the Council enjoyed the positive cooperation of non-members. I am also pleased to note that, in the case of Afghanistan, steady progress has been made in the area of reconstruction, with the cooperation of donor countries, and in restoring security, also with the support of members as well as non-member countries. I highly appreciate the fact that the Council, while maintaining its unity, has tackled such complicated issues as the situation in the Middle East and the International Criminal Court.

I would like to welcome the improvements that have been made in the working methods of the Council. I am particularly pleased that this year's report of the Security Council reflects the Council's efforts to respond to the criticisms expressed by non-

members of the Council during the debate on this item in the General Assembly last year. However, I would like to make two suggestions for further improvement.

First, I welcome the efforts of the Council to enhance participation of non-members by, for example, convening frequent open meetings and meetings with troop-contributing countries. However, the new mechanism for convening joint meetings between Council members and troop-contributing countries, which was introduced at the beginning of this year, still lacks clarity as to how it actually works. I would like to request the Council to make further improvements on this matter. It is the view of the Government of Japan that the effective functioning of a peacekeeping operation requires the involvement of not only those countries which provide military and police personnel but also those which supply civilian personnel or which make major financial contributions. We should always bear in mind that the smooth conduct of a peacekeeping operation is possible only with the appropriate involvement of those countries.

My second suggestion relates to Security Council missions. I understand that missions dispatched by the Security Council can play an important role in determining how the United Nations should be engaged in efforts to settle a regional conflict. However, from the viewpoint of cost-effectiveness, I think it is necessary that the costs, and the criteria for deciding when and where to dispatch a mission, as well as its composition, be made transparent. For instance, a clear explanation should be given to non-members why the Council has deemed it necessary to send a mission to Kosovo three years in succession.

I welcome the Council's voluntary efforts to improve its working methods, although I find it regrettable that discussion among Council members has been conducted on the premise that the existing size and composition will be maintained. The challenges to international peace and security are rapidly changing, both quantitatively and qualitatively, while the present system for maintaining international peace and security is led by the five States that were entrusted with that responsibility at the time when the United Nations was established, more than half a century ago. It thus makes us wonder whether the present system is the most suitable option for securing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council. As I have already mentioned, if we look back on its activities during the past year, we can see that the Council now requires knowledge and expertise in an ever-wider range of fields. Its counter-terrorism efforts, for example, involve areas of expertise ranging from public security to international financing. To ensure the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the cooperation of all Member States is, likewise, required in a broad range of areas.

Having said this, in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, I have to stress that I have no doubt — there is no question — that the present five permanent members have both the will and the adequate capacity to contribute to world peace and security and that they have discharged that responsibility well. In this new era, however, I must seriously ask: is it not important that other countries that have strong will and adequate capacity equal to those of the five permanent members also be actively engaged in contributing to world peace and stability, thereby further enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council?

Furthermore, with the admission of Switzerland and Timor-Leste, there are no fewer than 191 States Member of the United Nations. From the viewpoint of its representativeness, how can we keep the Council at its present size and composition, which is the same as it was nearly 40 years ago, when there were only 118 Member States? It is, of course, essential that the Council's efficiency be maintained. However, I think it is increasingly necessary to expand the Council, while paying due attention to ensuring that its effectiveness will not be sacrificed.

I believe that the views I have just expressed are shared by most of the United Nations membership. The fact that 80 countries referred to the need to reform the Security Council during the general debate last month supports this belief. Also, within the broader framework of strengthening the United Nations, we must bear in mind that Security Council reform remains one of the most important items on the United Nations agenda. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan put it in his report on that issue, "no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council" (*A/57/387, para. 20*).

In his statement at the close of the fifty-sixth session, the then President of the Assembly, Mr. Han Seung-soo, mentioned that in the past year the discussion of Security Council reform had not seen much change (*see A/56/PV.112, p.3*). Japan shares the

frustration that many countries are now feeling. Because the United Nations has had to devote itself to the fight against terrorism over the past year, we have been unable to build upon the momentum that had been generated at the Millennium Summit the previous year. It is thus all the more important that we revitalize our discussion now. In noting that the debate on reform will enter its tenth year next year, Prime Minister Koizumi avowed in his statement in this Hall in September (*see A/57/PV.4*) that Japan intends to work hard to achieve progress on Security Council reform.

My delegation believes that, as the first practical step towards concluding a comprehensive reform package, our discussions at the meetings of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform should now focus on such questions as the number of seats on an enlarged Council. Based on my delegation's experience last year, we cannot expect to make progress by repeating our discussion of existing papers. We thus look forward to the positive engagement by the Bureau of the Working Group, under the leadership of the President of the Assembly, Mr. Jan Kavan.

As we continue with this task, we also think that it will be helpful to provide opportunities to consider the issue from various angles, both inside and outside the United Nations, and with wider participation by both Government officials and non-governmental actors. In the event that concrete progress towards Security Council reform is not achieved, even after 10 years of deliberations on this issue, it might be worthwhile to consider measures for moving the discussion forward by, for example, holding meetings with representatives of Member States at the political level.

In the Millennium Declaration, heads of State or Government committed themselves to comprehensive reform of the Security Council. It is up to us to continue our efforts towards that end. Japan reaffirms its determination to do just that and is ready to cooperate with other Member States to realize our common objective, Security Council reform.

Mr. Nambiar (India): At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I must express India's absolute and unequivocal condemnation of the senseless and heinous terrorist act recently perpetrated in Bali, Indonesia, which resulted in the tragic death of so many innocent civilians. We convey our profound condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia, as well as to the families of the victims of this tragic incident. We reaffirm our determination to work to the full with the international community in united efforts to confront the terrible menace of international terrorism.

Please allow me to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou, President of the Security Council, for his introduction of the report of the Council (A/57/2 and Corr.1). I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election to the Security Council.

An analysis of the organic instrument that constitutes the bedrock of the United Nations, namely the Charter, shows that the exercise of the primary responsibility of the Security Council is linked to the consideration of its reports by the General Assembly. Article 24, paragraph 3 and Article 15 of the Charter require the Security Council to submit and the General Assembly to receive and consider annual and special reports. The Security Council's submission of its annual report to the General Assembly for consideration establishes a modicum of accountability in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the report of the Security Council this year represents a fresh approach to the very issues raised in this Assembly on the accountability and transparency of the Council in its functioning as an organ of the United Nations. The new format of the report and, more important, the attempt at reform leading to greater transparency and consultation with non-members on major issues, are important steps in the right direction.

In that context, I wish to place on record our appreciation for the proactive role played by Singapore, under the very able guidance of Ambassador Mahbubani, in ensuring that many of the ideas raised in the General Assembly for improvement in the functioning of the Security Council are being implemented. Admittedly, no effort of one single member can be successful without the cooperation of the other members. All the current members of the Security Council have undoubtedly contributed towards initiating the changes in the Council, and we wish to congratulate each of them on their effort. I wish to also thank the Secretariat for bringing out a much shorter, more concise and better focused report on the work of the Security Council.

Document S/PV.4616, which contains the provisional verbatim record of the Security Council's meeting held to consider the draft report of the Council to the General Assembly, provides a valuable insight into the effort and cooperation that went into the reforms sought to be introduced in the working of the Council. Ambassador Mahbubani, on the basis of his unique insight from within, has described the Security Council as one of the most conservative institutions in the world today. Reforms are not easily introduced into a body that has remained unchanged in core composition since its inception more than 50 years ago. Yet it is important that the Council also heed the calls for reform in an Organization that has initiated reform measures in all its other major organs.

We fully agree with Ambassador Mahbubani when he advocates the need for formalizing the system of drawing names to determine the speakers' list for public meetings. There is surely a method in the madness here, but we have yet to discern it. Standardization of the nomenclature of the different types of meetings of the Council would be another useful action. A perusal of document S/2002/603, a note by the President of the Security Council on procedural developments in the Council in 2001, indicates the multifarious forms of meetings, orders of speakers and innovations within them that the Council adopted during that period of time.

We fully appreciate the point brought out by Ambassador Levitte of France in his intervention at the Security Council meeting on the report that the Council has moved from a period of hibernation to a period of rapid development (*see S/PV.4616, p. 7*). In 2001, the Council held 192 formal meetings, the highest in a one-year period since its inception. Of greater importance is the fact that 159 of those meetings were public, the fourth highest number of public meetings in a year in the Council's history. That is a good beginning towards transparency.

We favour more open meetings, allowing the participation of non-members in the debates, thereby enabling the views of the wider comity of nations to be heard and taken into account in the Council's consideration of vital issues of global import. Better organization in the form of advance intimation of the monthly programme of work, information posted on the Council's United Nations web site and on the web sites of the Missions of Member States holding the presidency of the Council for a particular month, and wrap-up sessions are all positive developments in the move towards transparency in the Council's functioning.

Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom has spoken of the need to assess the quality, and not just the quantity, of the Council's work. We are in agreement with that observation. The Council moved quickly and decisively in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks to adopt resolutions 1363 (2001) and 1368 (2001) and the landmark resolution 1373 (2001), as well as the sanctions against the Taliban under the earlier resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1333 (2000). In January 2002, the Council adopted its resolution 1390 (2002) to respond to the threat posed by the Taliban and Al Qaeda. It established the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which has begun its work with the spirit and dynamism that the situation demands. The Council's active intervention in establishing the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and coordinating the role of peacekeepers in various conflict situations in Africa and elsewhere have proved valuable in dousing the fires raging in many of those areas.

Some of the Council's actions continue to require greater clarity, equity and sense of purpose. For instance, the role of the Council in running the oil-for-food programme for Iraq, under which Council members decide which contracts to approve and which to put on hold, has led to a situation where 866 contracts worth $2.7 billion have been put on hold as of 4 October 2002, without any effective or independent avenue to improve the situation. The reasons why the shortfalls in Iraqi oil exports have risen, leading to approximately $2.56 billion of humanitarian goods being placed on hold, have to be examined and gone into with a sense of urgency and compassion for the people of Iraq.

While the efforts at reform, initiated primarily by non-Council members to introduce greater transparency and accountability in the Council's functioning, have been an important step in the right direction, the process of reform should in no way be considered as having been completed or fully accomplished. We would urge the Security Council to make transparency an essential feature of its functioning. A major effort should go towards making closed meetings an exception. We agree wholeheartedly with Ambassador Greenstock that virtually all Council meetings, with the exception of

those involving negotiation of texts and those on issues that require confidentiality, could be kept open.

It is quite natural that, given the profusion of conflicts arising in the aftermath of the cold war, the Council would have overextended itself in its efforts to contribute to the resolution of those situations. While it is the Council's primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, it is necessary to realize the practical and realistic limitations of involvement in all situations, particularly those that are best contained through the efforts of the parties involved. Here again, we agree with Ambassador Greenstock when he says that there are some issues that the Council cannot resolve, and that, in his belief, avoiding the Council is, empirically, the right way to go.

We also appreciate the spirit behind which efforts have been made under what has now come to be known as the Arria formula to introduce greater informal interactions between the Council and the representatives of organizations that could provide valuable inputs into the Council's workings. A notable example of the utility of Arria-formula meetings, referred to by the President of the Security Council in his note on transparency in the Council, is the meeting held on 6 March 2001 with the Secretary-General of NATO. Arria-formula meetings have also been utilized by presidencies to facilitate meetings of Council members with representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society, including academics. That, on the face of it, is a desirable trend when it involves mainly social and economic issues that could have an impact on the Council's overall assessment of a situation. However, when it comes to dealing with complicated and long-standing political issues with the concomitant sensitivity and controversial implications, the Council would be well advised to exercise greater circumspection.

It is our considered view — and a view which I am certain many other members share — that in an effort to increase transparency, the Arria formula should not, in fact, introduce subjectivity and controversy that could ultimately prove more injurious than therapeutic to the issue it ostensibly seeks to resolve. Nor should it prove divisive within the Council membership. We would recommend that strong rules governing the issues on which such meetings may be called, the choice of parties involved in the briefing and the expression of the views of Member States, if any, be framed before any such initiative is undertaken in the future. This would be a genuine effort towards transparency. Otherwise, the question of why Arria-formula meetings are not held on issues in which Council members are themselves involved would indeed become a vexed one.

Beyond the flaws in the reporting procedures and in the meetings behind closed doors, there is a deeper subterranean fault line, a malady which points to the loss of moral vision and of the democratic ethos of representation in the Security Council. Many a problem confronts us today because of the way the Security Council is structured. The structure and composition of the Council are demonstrably out of touch with the realities on the ground and are no longer capable of meeting the aspirations and expectations of the membership and of the international community at large.

The solution lies in reforming and restructuring the Council comprehensively. Much has been said and written on this subject, and consensus continues to elude us in the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group. But on one point there is general agreement: the Security Council, as it is composed today, is unrepresentative and anachronistic, and in no way reflects a world that has changed dramatically in the more than 50 years since San Francisco. That the developing countries, which constitute the vast majority of the general membership of the United Nations, find no place in the category of permanent members and are generally inadequately represented in the non-permanent category, serves only to further highlight the unrepresentative and unbalanced nature of a body that, by definition, is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, but which, in practical fact, is ill-equipped to do so to the satisfaction of the Members of the Organization. The Council's actions cannot be seen to command a legitimacy which its own composition and working methods do not possess.

There is little disagreement among Member States that the Council requires reform to better reflect current global realities; reform that imparts balance, representativeness and legitimacy to the Council and reflects contemporary reality; reform that is not piecemeal or partial — which would only serve to perpetuate the unrepresentative character of the Council and erode its credibility even further; reform that is comprehensive, includes expansion of the

Council's membership in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories and improves its working methods; and reform of its decision-making processes. Any reform that does not contain these core elements would, in our opinion, be no reform.

We have had occasion to outline India's position on Security Council restructuring on several occasions in the past, and we shall refrain from doing so in detail now. However, we would like to caution against the temptation to resort to piecemeal and partial solutions. After toiling for nine years, if we were to agree to an expansion of the Council in the non-permanent category alone, or if we were to make cosmetic changes in its working methods, we would be doing a major disservice, not only to ourselves but to the Organization as a whole. Expansion is needed in both categories of Council membership, and if an attempt to do otherwise is made, we would be not only shying away from the main issues that confront us but also perpetuating an international system characterized by inequity.

Turning to the Working Group, we note that there have been many fewer sessions and meetings this year compared to the past, reflecting the present state of ennui among member States. There has been progress, though, in the Council's working practices. Particularly noteworthy in this connection is the stepped-up interaction between the Council and the troop-contributing countries, which we would like to see as an ongoing, expanding and fruitful interaction in the years to come. India remains committed to evolution in this respect.

We have deliberately confined ourselves to outlining very briefly the fundamental precepts on which we believe the reform and expansion of the Security Council should be structured. My delegation will participate in and contribute to the consideration of specific issues when the Working Group begins a detailed discussion of them next year. Suffice it to say that India remains committed to implementing the call of world leaders in the Millennium Declaration to achieve comprehensive reform of the Council in all its aspects and that we see the Working Group as the legitimate instrument with which to do so. We welcome all constructive proposals to carry our work forward, and would be happy to cooperate with the Bureau and all other members of the Open-ended Working Group towards that end.

We also wish to place on record our reservations concerning the need for the Security Council to spend so much time on thematic issues such as women and armed conflict, children and armed conflict and the protection of civilians in armed conflict, all of which pertain to the management of conflict and are therefore outside the Council's mandate. This transgression into areas allocated to other United Nations bodies competent to handle many of these thematic issues could be condoned if the discussions added value. Unfortunately, they add nothing to either the norms set by international law or to its practice.

In conclusion, I wish to state that the process of introducing reform and change into the Council's functioning is both noteworthy and laudable. While welcoming them, we also look forward to the continuation of this process. The Security Council should not be seen as an isolated island of exclusion in a democratic polity. The attempts at reform and greater participation have to be seen in this light.

Mr. Ngo Duc Thang (Viet Nam): At the outset, I wish to join other speakers in expressing our heartfelt condolences to the Government of Indonesia and to the relatives of all of the victims of the brutal terrorist attack that took place in Bali on Saturday. We condemn the attack in the strongest terms.

The delegation of Viet Nam attaches great importance to the agenda items under consideration: the Security Council's work and its reform. I wish to compliment Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani and his staff for their part in compiling the concise and insightful report (A/57/2 and Corr.1) that covers the work of the Security Council for the period from 16 June 2001 to 31 July 2002. Given the number of issues in the report, my delegation would like to make some observations on several topics which we consider to be of vital importance.

We hold the view that the work of the Security Council has brought about certain positive results in maintaining peace and security in Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, parts of Africa and the Balkans, and especially in assuming major new responsibilities in combating global terrorism after the tragic events of 11 September 2001. Immediately after that terrorist attack, the Security Council adopted its resolution 1373 (2001) and set up the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) charged with monitoring the implementation of that resolution. The CTC embarked on its work seriously,

quickly providing guidance to Member States on how they should report on steps taken to implement the resolution.

We appreciate the attention paid by the United Nations system in general and the Security Council in particular to various aspects of the Afghan crisis. The Council has greatly contributed to restoring peace in the country and to helping the Afghans to form a broad-based and representative Government and to start their national reconstruction after more than two decades of war, terror, suffering and misery.

The declaration of independence of Timor-Leste on 20 May 2002 is another real success story for the United Nations, in which the work of the Security Council must be commended as well.

However, while applauding the encouraging results of the Council's work, we cannot fail but mention the protracted Middle East crisis. Despite the attention paid by the Council to the ongoing crisis during the past year, it is regrettable that the continued aggressive policy of the Israeli Government on one hand and the lack of consistent measures by the Security Council on the other did not allow for the implementation of several Security Council resolutions on the issue. As a result, the situation in the region remains volatile, and the prospect of lasting peace is ever more remote. In this connection, my delegation believes that it is necessary for every State Member of the United Nations to abide by the Council's resolutions, thereby leaving no impression of double standard in the Council's work.

With respect to the Council's work, we are pleased to note that the Council has made a number of useful changes in its methods of work, such as an increase in the number of open meetings; briefings provided at the end of the monthly Council presidency; consultations with troop-contributing countries; and debates open to non-members of the Council. Together with the Council's interactive meetings with representatives of the Secretary-General, his special envoys and the Secretary-General himself, as well as thematic debates and wrap-up discussions on the work of the Security Council, all these practices can help enhance transparency and accountability in the Council's work and make that organ more effective and democratic.

We welcome further measures enabling non-members of the Council to participate more actively in the discussion of the most important issues, for it is our conviction that this will help the Council better to equip itself to deal with crises when they occur in future.

My delegation joins with other speakers to call on the Council to make a critical evaluation of the effectiveness of sanctions imposed on Member States, which have caused untold suffering to innocent people, particularly women and children. We believe that sanctions are outdated and should never be used indefinitely. In this regard, we welcome the Council's decision to lift the embargo imposed on the Sudan and call it to do the same in the case of Iraq.

My country has always paid special interest to the reform of the Security Council, as it forms the cornerstone of the overall process of United Nations reform. Therefore, we wish to reiterate our position that there is a need to accelerate this urgent task, as the lack of tangible progress in fundamental areas of reform, despite nine years of discussion, has no doubt been frustrating. It is true that the issues are of a complex and sensitive nature, which makes the task of reaching agreement a formidable challenge. But the United Nations cannot afford to fail in this important task, or the credibility of the Organization as a whole will be put at risk. My delegation reiterates its support for the view that more vigorous efforts should be made by all countries to move forward the process of reforming the Security Council, as expressed in the Millennium Declaration.

Viet Nam believes that reform of the Security Council must be comprehensive and that it should be pursued in the context of strengthening the authority of the General Assembly, be based on transparency and on democratic principles, and be undertaken in full conformity with its intrinsic purpose. The reform must reflect the three basic components of the process: an increase in the Council's membership; decision-making process; and working methods. We believe that it is urgent and necessary to correct the current imbalance by ensuring more balanced and equitable geographical representation and by increasing the participation of developing countries, emerging regional players and centres of economic power.

It is important to ensure that the interest of all nations are sufficiently reflected in the composition of the Security Council, in line with the complexity of a

world that has seen great development, both quantitative and qualitative, in international relations.

We support the idea of enlarging both categories of members — permanent and non-permanent — and believe that due recognition should be given to improving the Council's working procedures and decision-making process, so that it can become more democratic, representative, and transparent and be better prepared to face the security challenges of the twenty-first century.

Let me conclude my statement by congratulating Germany, Spain, Pakistan, Angola and Chile on their election to the Security Council. I hope that the new non-permanent members will help enhance the openness, transparency and representativeness of the Council to the full extent permissible under the current structure of this main body of the United Nations. I also wish to express our gratitude to the outgoing members for their contribution to the promotion of peace and international security.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Let me begin by expressing my deep condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia, as well as to Australia and to the other countries who lost their nationals in the recent terrorist tragedy in Bali. We hope that the perpetrators of this atrocity will be brought to justice soon.

We wish also to express our appreciation to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, the Permanent Representative of Cameroon and the current President of the Security Council, for introducing the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly. May I take this opportunity to thank those delegations which have congratulated Pakistan on its election to the Council for the next two years.

I would in turn wish to felicitate Angola, Chile, Spain and Germany on their election to the Council last month. We look forward to working closely with them as well as with other Council members in our common pursuit of global peace and security. I would wish to pay special tribute to the outgoing members of the Council for the important contributions to its work.

This year, the Security Council's annual report, submitted in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter, has been presented in a new, improved format with an analytical summary. We appreciate the conscious effort made to reduce the size of the report and to avoid repetition, as well as the active role played by the Council's non-permanent members in making these improvements.

First, I would note the Council's visible successes. The Council's supervision and support for a number of peacekeeping operations — especially those in Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone — have been the most visible manifestations of collective security, as visualized in the United Nations Charter. Both the Security Council and the United Nations have learnt appropriate lessons from the past. We hope that in future, too, the Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries will work together to ensure the effective realization of the larger purposes of the re-establishment and preservation of peace and security in so many troubled parts of the world.

During the past year, the Security Council made a significant contribution to combating international terrorism, including the adoption of provisions to arrest the financing and support of terrorism through the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The Security Council also played a role in shaping the events in Afghanistan. Yet, all these endeavours to build peace and restore hope in Afghanistan remain under threat so long as the international community, including the Security Council, is unable to consolidate peace and security and establish President Karzai's authority in all parts and regions of Afghanistan. To this end, Pakistan has continued to urge the Security Council and the Secretary-General, as well as the major Powers, to authorize the deployment of additional international forces, especially in regional centres. It is imperative for the Council to take early and resolute action for this purpose.

The Middle East crisis and the prolonged tragedy of the Palestinian people have continued to challenge the credibility of the Security Council. The Council achieved a high point when it adopted resolution 1397 (2002), creating the framework for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the principle of land for peace. Since then, however, confronted by repeated Israeli military incursions, punitive measures, the economic strangulation of the Palestinian people and spiralling violence in the occupied territories, the Security Council's deliberations have become almost a parody of the role which the Charter had perceived for it.

Among the most glaring of the Council's failures has been its inability even to reverse the threat to peace in South Asia, even though the India-Pakistan issue and the underlying dispute over Jammu and Kashmir remain on the Council's agenda. With one million troops deployed by India along Pakistan's eastern border and the Line of Control in Kashmir; with repeated threats from New Delhi of war and the use of force against Pakistan; and with artillery and small arms exchanges a daily feature on the Line of Control, there could be no clearer and more tangible threat to international peace and security, even if one were to discount the danger arising from the fact that the two antagonists possess nuclear weapons.

The United Nations Charter requires that, in the event of a breach of the peace or a threat of use of force, the Security Council shall address the situation with a view to restoring such peace and security. The Council's responsibility to prevent a conflict in South Asia, which has been described as "the most has dangerous place in the world", is clear and present. Yet, although the Council's attention was drawn to the crisis repeatedly during the year, including by the Secretary-General himself, the Council remained impassive. Not even an Arria-formula meeting could be convened for this purpose. War may have been temporarily averted by the active diplomacy of some major Powers, but neither the Council nor the international community can afford to substitute conflict management for conflict resolution.

During the Security Council's debate on this report, Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore referred to the Council's "orphans" — peoples on whose behalf the Council had undertaken to act but never did. Most prominent among these orphans are the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The Council has adopted a series of resolutions defining a clear framework for the political disposition of Kashmir in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the Kashmiri people, under a United Nations-supervised plebiscite. These resolutions remain to be implemented.

The Council should not be oblivious to the erosion of its credibility flowing from non-compliance with its resolutions. The Council has been convincingly reminded of this in recent weeks. Ineffectiveness and weakness flow not only from an absence of determination and will to secure compliance with certain resolutions of the Security Council; they are also manifested by the acceptance and application of double standards and discrimination. The Council's resolutions represent international legality; they must be respected comprehensively by all sides, in all regions and in all circumstances.

The Council's failures have not been due mainly to the shortcomings in its procedures or, indeed, in its structures. These failures are principally due to a shortfall in the commitment of Member States, individually and collectively, to conduct their policies and uphold their legitimate national interests strictly in accordance with the United Nations Charter and its principles.

We are convinced that the departures from principle witnessed in the Council would become more isolated and infrequent if the Council were to become a more representative body. Pakistan therefore continues to support the expansion of the Security Council's membership. At the same time, we will continue to resist proliferation of the centres of privilege represented by the unfortunate institution of the five permanent members of the Security Council and their veto power. It is clear that, for the present, consensus within the General Assembly would favour the expansion of only the non-permanent, elected members of the Council.

There have been prolonged endeavours to improve the Council's working methods, transparency and effectiveness. We appreciate these. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the improved practices should now be codified.

We also welcome the recent efforts to make the Council's work more transparent and inclusive for the rest of the United Nations membership. Rule 48 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure specifically states: "Unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public." Despite the increase in the number of public debates and the consultations with troop-contributing countries, the Council's decisions continue to be made mostly behind closed doors. In a statement to the Council in 1994, the representative of one of the five permanent members described such informal consultations in the following words:

> "Informal meetings are not even real Council meetings at all; they have no official existence, and are assigned no number. Yet it is in these meetings that all the Council's work is carried out." (*S/PV.3483, p. 2*)

The argument that there is a trade-off between efficiency and transparency is a false one, we believe. Indeed, it can be argued more cogently that the Wilsonian principle of "open covenants, openly arrived at" is the one that will enhance the effectiveness of the Council and the consistent application of the United Nations Charter's principles. In the circumstances, we believe that the General Assembly, the most universal and representative organ of the United Nations, should recommend the following measures to the Security Council.

First, the improvements made in the Council's working methods should be codified, as recommended by the Secretary-General. Secondly, rule 48 of Security Council's provisional rules of procedure should be adhered to in letter and in spirit. Thirdly, a compendium should be drawn up of those Security Council resolutions whose implementation remains outstanding. Fourthly, the Security Council, in cooperation with the Secretary-General, should undertake a thorough consideration of how the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter can be fully utilized to promote the pacific settlement of conflicts and disputes.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.